CHAPTER FOUR

TOPOGRAPHIES OF REMEMBRANCE

I

Ways of seeing: dreams of landscape and the seigneurial gaze

Popular memory in Tudor, Stuart and early Georgian England was embedded in localized senses of place and landscape. Increasingly, these senses came into conflict with elite ideas of landscape which both reproduced and sustained wider, epochal shifts in production, exploitation, belief and social relations. Elite contemporaries were well aware of how deeply custom was grafted onto the environment: as Edward Coke put it in 1641, 'Custom lies upon the land'.[1] In seeking to refashion the material environment in its own interest, powerful interests also tried to rework readings of both custom and landscape.

In making the argument that senses of landscape lay at the core of early modern popular memory, I should be clear about my use of three key terms: environment; landscape; and place. By environment, I refer to the material fact of topography, settlement, cultivation and so on. Landscape is a cultural construction, the sum of our perception of the material world. By place, I refer to the construction of a social collectivity upon the landscape: the creation of mutual, affective ties within a distinct locality. Thus, on an elementary level, whereas environment comprises the material world – contours, structures, organic life - 'Landscape is a signifying system through which the social is reproduced and transformed, explored and structured ... Landscape, above all, represents a means of conceptual ordering that stresses

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[1] Thompson, Customs in common, 97-98.

relations'.[2] It is therefore a product of human agency.[3] Landscape is above all a social construction: a collective way of seeing, into which are built collective ways of remembering. As Tim Ingold puts it: 'The landscape tells – or rather is – a story. It enfolds the lives and times of predecessors who, over the generations, have moved around in it and played their part in its formation. To perceive the landscape is therefore to carry out an act of remembrance, and remembering is not so much a matter of calling up an internal image, stored in the mind, as of engaging perpetually with an environment that is itself pregnant with the past'.[4] Many geographers assume that different modes of production generate both historically distinct material environments and similarly distinct ways of perceiving those environments.[5] Archaeology adds to this the insight that states and elites inscribe their authority upon the environment and seek to instruct their subject populations in the reading of that environment.[6] Since landscapes are bearers of power relations, 'Spatial and temporal practices are never neutral in social affairs. They always express some kind of class or other social content, and are more often than not the focus of intense social struggle'.[7]

In recent years, literary scholars and cultural historians have suggested that rapid developments in cartography and surveying in the late sixteenth century were expressive of fundamental shifts in perceptions of space. These were, it is argued, driven by the commodifying impulse that is seen as characteristic of early agrarian capitalism, foreshadowing later developments, in particular the implication of cartography in European

[2] C. Tilley, A phenomenology of landscape: places, paths and monuments (Oxford, 1994), 34.
[3] A.B. Knapp and W. Ashmore, 'Archaeological landscapes: constructed, conceptualized, ideational', in W. Ashmore and A.B. Knapp (eds), Archaeologies of landscape: contemporary perspectives (Oxford, 1999), 1.
[4] T. Ingold, 'The temporality of the landscape', World Archaeology, 25, 2 (1993), 152.
[5] D. Harvey, The condition of postmodernity: an enquiry into the origins of cultural change (Oxford, 1990); R.A. Dodgshon, The European past: social evolution and spatial order (Basingstoke, 1987); T. Cresswell, Place: an introduction (Oxford, 2009).
[6] See for instance Bradley, Past in prehistoric societies, 119-22; A.T. Smith, The political landscape: constellations of authority in early complex societies (Berkeley: Calif., 2003), 166-8.
[7] Harvey, Condition of postmodernity, 239.

imperialism.[8] Barbara Bender has argued that what emerges from the early modern period is a western gaze which is commodifying and patriarchal, one based upon a view of the land as passive. Cartography, with its bird-eye view – Bender calls it the 'lord's eye' – 'was part-cause/part-effect of developing mercantile capitalism.' As she puts it, western cartography 'wasn't just an adjunct to exploration, colonisation, or the establishment of property rights, it actually created the conditions for such developments'.[9]

There is an important parallel here with James C. Scott's account of the means by which the modern state has imposed its will through its command of space. An element within the projection of what Scott calls the 'cadastral' view (one based on specific enumeration, often for fiscal purposes) upon forest communities (Scott sees the woodland as an especially fraught area of confrontation between states and peoples) was the generation of a distinct way of seeing. While careful to identify sources of revenue and to nail down specific forms of tenure, Scott suggests that the cadastral state 'typically ignored the vast, complex, and negotiated social uses of the forest for hunting and gathering, pasturage, fishing, charcoal making, trapping and collecting wood and valuable minerals as well as the forest's significance for magic, worship, refuge, and so on'.[10] The cadastral state, says Scott, sought to render local variety legible in terms that it could understand: those of narrow commodification and control. What was occurring here was the imposition of a different episteme – a different world-view – upon the land.

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[8] The best exposition of this view is in A. McRae, God speed the plough: the rpresentation of agrarian England, 1500-1660 (Cambridge, 1996), 169-97. On cartography, see in particular J.B. Harley, 'Silences and secrecy: the hidden agenda of cartography in early modern Europe', Imago Mundi, 40 (1988), 57-76; idem., 'Maps, knowledge and power', in D. Cosgrove and S. Daniels (eds.), The iconography of landscape: essays on the symbolic representation and use of past environments (Cambridge, 1988), 277-312.

[9] B. Bender, 'Mapping alternative worlds', in S. Clifford and A. King (eds), From place to place: maps and parish maps (London, 1996), 41-2.

[10] Scott, Seeing like a state, 13.

Fiscal seigneurialism created demand for the new trade of surveying. Surveyors were often possessed of some legal training and had the historical knowledge necessary to search musty archives in order to advance lord's claims or disprove a popular custom; they also possessed the capacity to employ new mathematical surveying techniques in order to map and enumerate a lord's estates.[11] Surveying therefore entailed a close reading of both landscape and local history. What emerged from surveying – rather like the practices of Scott's cadastral state - was a narrow and impoverished vision of landscape, one blind to senses of place, emerges from the records of some early modern surveyors: precise acreages of fields are noted, as are forms of tenure, the ages of tenants, the value of woodland. Surveyors frequently appended written accounts of manorial customs to their lists of landholdings. In some cases, the visions of customary law presented therein are similarly dessicated.[12] They are a clear expression of lordly interests, listing tenants' services, dues, fines and rents, mostly in set terms that are very similar from manor to manor. All the sense of local richness and variety, and of the depth, complexity and <u>meaning</u> of custom is lost in these custumals: instead, like the surveys and maps which lords were commissioning, we get a vision of local custom that is reduced to a bleak, bald, uniform statement of the lord's interests.

Underlying the rapid development of cartography and surveying was the renewed interest which, from the latter third of the sixteenth century, lords were taking in their estates. In the mid-sixteenth century, it was still possible for lords to commission surveys with the intention of protecting the interests of 'pore men as well husbandmen as artyfycers', maintaining an

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[11] P.D.A. Harvey, 'English estate maps: their early history and their use as historical evidence', in D. Buisseret (ed.), <u>Rural images: estate maps in the Old and New Worlds</u> (Chicago, 1996), 27-61. On the practicalities of surveying, see A.W. Richeson, <u>English land measuring to 1800: instruments and practices</u> (Cambridge: Mass., 1966).

[12] The clearest examples I have found concern a sequence of manors in late Elizabethan and early Stuart Wiltshire. See WSA, 9/10/254; WSA, 2203/11; WSA, 9/9/371; WSA, 9/24/452. For important contemporary commentaries, see WSA, 473/57; WSA, 108/15. For the local context, see Bettey (ed.), <u>Wiltshire farming</u>, 167.

equitably distributed system of landholding with the intention of 'upholding' a local community.[13] But as inflation bit into their rent rolls, lords increasingly looked into ways of raising increased revenue – selling off assets such as woodland; enclosing common land; increasing rents and dues upon tenants.[14] This often entailed dispute over local custom, as tenants insisted (for instance) that since 'time immemorial' their rents had been fixed at a low level. Lords therefore turned to surveyors both to provide a detailed overview of their present assets, but also to search into medieval documentation (most typically manor court rolls) in order to demonstrate that they were entitled to much higher rents and fines from their tenants than they were receiving, or to restrict access to resources hitherto held in common.[15] The economic imperatives that were transforming lordship at the end of the sixteenth century entailed the elimination of customs that obstructed increases in lordly profit and control. Seigneurial powers that had been lost in the past, obscured by tenant assertiveness, were revived on the basis of the careful reconstruction of earlier evidence. On the Earl of Arundel's manor of Cocking (Sussex) in 1568, for instance, the copyholders claimed that their rents and fines were customarily fixed at very low levels; but as Arundel's surveyor made clear, 'in very deed there were no suche customs'. Therefore, 'for the better satyssfynge of the … Ten[a]nts And to make the truthe of the … Custome manyfest and playnly to appere', Arundel had court rolls from the reigns of Henry VI, Edward IV, Henry VII and Henry VIII 'openly … shewed and redd to his … ten[a]nts'; these demonstrated that, earlier in the history of the manor, the lord had been able to fix rents and fines as he pleased.[16] What

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[13] B. Watts and E. Winyard, The history of Atherstone (Stoke-on-Trent, 1988), 26.

[14] See for instance G.B. Harrison (ed.), Advice to his son (London, 1930), 75-77; G.R. Batho, 'The finances of a Stuart nobleman: Henry Percy, 9th Earl of Northumberland, 1564-1632', EcHR, 2nd. ser., 9, 3 (1957).

[15] The Crown was relatively late in attempting to squeeze revenue from its tenants. See R. Hoyle, '"Vain projects": the Crown and its copyholders in the reign of James I', in J. Chartres and D. Hey (eds), English rural society, 1500-1800: essays in honour of Joan Thirsk (Cambridge, 1990), 73-104.

[16] WSRO, Cowdray 1306, fols. 29r-30v. For similar examples, see R.B. Manning, 'Antiquarianism and seigneurial reaction: Sir Robert and Sir Thomas Cotton and their tenants', Historical Research, 63, 152 (1990), 277-288; WSRO, Wistow Ms 5378; SA, 6001/377.

resulted in many communities was a clash between opposed senses of landscape, law and of the past.

The best known surveyor of the period was John Norden, author of the The Surveyor's Dialogue (1618). In this work, Norden asked his reader to envisage 'the lord sitting in his chayre', studying a map of his estates 'rightly drawne by true information' which 'describeth so the lively image of a manor, and every branch and member of the same' such that the lord 'may see what he hath, and where and how he lyeth, and in whole use and occupation of every particular is upon suddaine view'.[17] Norden saw surveying and cartography as directly supportive of the social order, explaining that just as

> every man is not borne nor bound to one faculty or trade, neither consistenth the common wealth of one member, but of many, and every one a severall office, too long to express them all in kinde. Is not the eye Surveyor for the whole body outward, and the heart the searcher within? And hath not every common wealth overseers of like nature, which importeth as much as surveyors? And is not every Mannor a little common wealth, whereof the Tenants are the members, the Land the body, and the Lord the head? And doth it not follow that this head should have an overseer or Surveyor of the state and government of the whole body?[18]

Linking patriarchy to cartography, Norden contrasted the orderliness of surveying and cartography with the chaos that flowed from lords' failure to maintain their estates:

> In private families, if there be none to oversee and to manage things domesticall, what disorders, what outrage, what uncivill and ungodly courses, and what spoyle and ruine of all things doe follow? The like of necessity, where Tenants are left unto their own wills and yet, as the unruly company in a family could not be contented to be masters of

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[17] Kain and Biagent, The cadastral map, 33.
[18] Norden, Surveyor's dialogue, 27.

themselves; and to have no controlment: So Tenants can well brooke their Lords absence … wher a multitude is without a guide or governor, there is disorder,

In order to counteract this threat, Norden recommended that lords should conduct surveys every seven to ten years, 'for the inconveniences that grow by the neglect thereof, are so many kinds, and they so dangerous…that they work contempt in the Tenants, and losse to the Lord.'[19] For Norden, then, surveying and cartography were ideologically loaded: he projected a commodifying gaze, the sharp and acquisitive eye of fiscal seigneurialism.

Norden's Surveyor's Dialogue is not just a theorization of fiscal seigneurialism. It is also a profoundly practical text, giving advice on how best to survey land and search into old titles. The book built upon his everyday experience of working as a surveyor of the estates of some of the most powerful individuals in the land. Early in his career, in 1602 Norden had been employed by Thomas Lord Howard to survey the lordship of Oswestry, on the Shropshire border with Wales. His most immediate concern lay in seeking out resources which the lord could exploit. Norden noted of the commons that 'moste of these wastes may be inclosed to the greate benefit of the contrey and profit of yor Lordship. But there are some pervers people that will hinder the best course of common good'.[20] One way in which Howard might profit from the tenants' encroachment onto the commons, Norden suggested, would be for the tenants to compound for the recognition of their tenancies in return for payment of a cash sum. The lord thereby lost part of the manorial waste, but gained an immediate cash payment plus yearly rents thereafter.[21] As Norden proceeded through the lordship, noting where woods might be protected from 'hackers' and 'stealers, making recommendations for the enclosure of common land and proposing the expropriation of the mineral resources, he also retained a

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[19] ibid., 30.
[20] W.J. Slack (ed.), The lordship of Oswestry, 1393-1607: a series of extents and rentals, (Shrewsbury, 1951), 68.
[21] ibid., 57-8.

keen eye for ways in which the lord's rights might be reasserted or extended. Norden therefore suggested the reestablishment of the manorial monopoly on milling; he searched into tenures, looking for unclaimed rents and dues; he proposed that tenants should offer cash payments for their lapsed labour duties; he looked into the lord's right to maintain a warren; and he studied lordly entitlement to the coal, stone, limestone and peat reserves.

Surveying was controversial: Norden ran up against stout local opposition in Oswestry. Observing that in cutting firewood and allowing their goats roam amongst the woods the 'cottagers are noisome neighbours unto the forrests', he noted that 'a tenant of one Mr Morris ap Meredith had cut and brought home to his house manie bauens out of the forest which I reproved him for it, and he verie peremptorylye sayde he woulde cut whoseo sayde nay'.[22] In searching out assets and rights which the lord might exploit, Norden constantly came into friction with the long-established practices of the inhabitants. At Mynydd Sweney, for instance, he noted that 'In this waste are manie freestones and they are continually digged and carried awaye by any that will take them without controulment I take it, it were better they were sett to your Lordships better advantage'.[23]

Throughout his survey of the lordship of Oswetry, Norden struggled to impose clarity, precision and order. As Simon Sandall has argued in his study of lordly practices in the Forest of Dean, this represented an attempt to render landscape and custom legible to the eyes of elite outsiders.[24] Tenants and cottagers responded with an evasive vagueness, sometimes cannily saying as little as possible on key subjects. Coming to the cottage occupied by Thomas Iveson, for instance, Norden noted that that it seemed to be built upon the waste, but

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[22] ibid., 60.
[23] ibid., 66
[24] Sandall, 'Custom and popular senses of the past in the Forest of Dean'.

that 'he claimeth the inheritance of it, but sheweth not howe he came by it'.[25] A similar cloud had been drawn over the practices of the tenants of Teevonnen. Here, Norden found to his frustration that 'About this place there is more that seemeth to be inclosed but will not be acknowledged'.[26] In Myddlton, encoroachments on the waste had been 'conceyled' and 'lye still obscured'; there was an urgent need for 'diligent searche of the truth'.[27] At Soughton, Norden encountered a wall of silence: parts of the waste, he thought, were 'verie much inclosed not long since, as appeareth by the inclosures but will not be confessed'. Elsewhere, he faced outright intimidation: 'some of the inhabitants of Pentrekeven began to threaten us in this place with verie unseemely words towards your Lordship as if they were men without lawe or government'.[28]

Norden found one particular Oswestry custom especially maddening. This was a right called 'Kyttir'. Proposing that a common be enclosed, Norden noted that the tenants claimed 'Kyttir' upon the land, which is 'a suggested title of inheritance undivided, which is a vayne conceyt among themselves without any ground of reason or lawe'.[29] What made the claim to Kyttir controversial, then, was the suggestion that the commons were owned not by the lord but by the settlement as a whole, as their collective property. Norden noted in exasperation that 'This Cuttire is an antient dreame … and although …[the inhabitants] would have it to signifie inheritance undivided it is onlie indeed common in Welsh and hath no other understanding … of this Cuttire'.[30] Against the claim to Kyttir, Norden cited a range of historical documentation; but this availed him little when faced by the tenants' continued belief in their 'antient dreame' of collective ownership. Certain individuals made themselves

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[25] Slack (ed.), <u>The lordship of Oswestry</u>, 54.
[26] <u>ibid</u>., 72.
[27] <u>ibid</u>., 73.
[28] <u>ibid</u>., 70.
[29] <u>ibid</u>., 65.
[30] <u>ibid</u>., 79.

especially obnoxious. Norden noted that Richard Lloid of Dryll y Probydd 'pretendeth all wastes to be Kyttire, in theire constructions, inheritance undevided and he being of the Jury would not be drawne by the aunceint Court rolls to finde them the Lords wastes, but theire owne inheritance and yet the rolls did manifestly prove it'.[31] Striking a similar tone, Norden noted wearily of Mr Morris Tannett of Bryn that 'this man also standeth upon Kyttire and affirmeth that your Lordship hath nothinge to doe with the waste, being foreman of the Jurye seeing the Records would take noe knowledge of his error'.

Surveying was a far from neutral practice: rather, it injected a particular set of interests into its sense of landscape. This reading of the work of men like John Norden supports in some measure the proposition that specific modes of production produce their own particular ways of seeing. Within this loosely Marxian formulation, it is in the early modern period that surveying and mapping began to define capitalist commodification, enmeshing elite views of space and place within a cash nexus.[32] In this process, estate maps are afforded a special significance.[33] In such formulations, transitions between modes of production generate, in a mechanistic fashion, changes in mentalities. Thus, Henri Lefebvre argued that since 'each mode of production has its own particular space, the shift from one mode to another must entail the production of a new space'.[34] He goes on: 'examination of the transitions between modes of production will reveal that a fresh space is indeed generated during such changes.' For Lefebvre, 'every society - and hence every mode of production ... produces a space, its

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[31] ibid., 71.

[32] For this view, see C. Bartolovich, 'Spatial stories: The surveyor and the politics of transition', in A. Vos (ed.), Place and displacement in the Renaissance (Binghamton, NY, 1995), 255-83; R. Lemke Sanford, Maps and memory in early modern England: a sense of place (Basingstoke, 2002); Johnson, Archaeology of capitalism, 114-6.

[33] For more on this, see Harley, 'Maps, knowledge and power'; idem., 'Silences and secrecy'

[34] H. Lefebvre, The production of space, (Oxford, 1991), 46; Bartolovich, 'Spatial stories', 268. Lefebvre wasn't necessarily wrong in every instance. We might compare the Domesday Book with the surveys of John Norden – the one based upon measurements of labour services as enacted upon the land, the other with the precise measurement of profits to be derived from the land – to see that Lefebvre's point might have some validity.

own space'.[35]

History, however, is never quite this neat. What are we to make of senses of space in that great tract of time which historians label the 'early modern'? Viewed from a macro-historical perspective, it is clear that between c.1450 and c. 1800, England witnessed fundamental and profound shifts in the ownership and control of the means of production, distribution and exchange, together with the emergence of new labour processes and modes of exploitation. But this long view does not in of itself help us to appreciate the lived experiences and mental worlds of the generations who lived under this great arch of capitalist evolution. In attempting to understand the ways in which senses of the past were plotted within landscapes, we need, then, to set to one side such grand narratives and to consider more finely tuned senses of the world: this will be the subject matter of the next two sections. We also need to gain a closer appreciation of the ways in which poorer people could contest the imposition of new landscapes upon their communities. The last section of this chapter focuses on this issue, dealing with the ways in which middling and poorer people deployed their own visions of landscape as a political resource. Landscape, then, just like social memory, was a bearer not only of meaning, but was also a site of conflict. There were other ways of dealing with estate surveyors and aggressive lordship, though, than outright confrontation. The remainder of this sub-chapter considers the ways in which subordinates could mitigate the worst effects of fiscal seigneurialism through negotiating the process of surveying. Here, we find a kind of popular agency: one that is not directly oppositional, but which none the less could be highly effective – a knowing, tactical, careful cooperation.

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[35] Lefebvre, The production of space, 31, 47.

In some recent accounts, it has been argued that cartography 'devalued the memories of the estate population in which feudal affiliations had been grounded'.[36] Yet the archival evidence suggests that a more complex interplay of dominant and subordinate underlay the production of cartographic meaning: readership of any estate map will show the care with which boundaries between and within manors were drawn. Individual tenants' estates were laid down to their individual roods; a painful exactitude underlay the delineation of boundaries between one field and another, as it did also between field and common. This exactitude drew upon the very precise testimony of people like the 67 year-old yeoman William Platts who, in 1618, gave an account of the boundaries of his home village of Ashford (Derbyshire) to a commission empowered by the Duchy of Lancaster to hear evidence in a legal case concerning the boundaries of his manor.[37] William explained that he had 'sev[er]all tymes' been a member of the manorial jury of Ashford and that on some three occasions he had gone the perambulation of the manorial bounds, the earliest being 30 years ago. In order to give some sense of the subtle twists, turnings, nuances, readings and meanings that might be embodied within such testimonies, it is worth quoting William Platts' testimony at some length. It ought to be taken as representative of the tens of thousands of such accounts of manorial and parochial boundaries that survive in equity and church court records. William explained how

> hee this dep[onen]t was present when one William Senior a Surveyor did make the plot
> [i.e., map] now shewed unto him and saieth that the meanes m[ar]rks and knowne
> places hereafter followinge are p[ar]te of the meares and [that he has] knowne the
> Lo[rdshi]pp of Ashford and the Lordshipps and townes of Taddington and Monyash
> And saieth that the bottom of one dale called deepe dale is the meare and bounde

[36] Bartolovich, 'Spatial stories', 257.
[37] TNA, DL4/67/59. For Senior's work, see D.V. Fowkes and G.R. Potter (eds), <u>William Senior's survey of the estates of the first and second earls of Devonshire</u>, Derbyshire Record Society, 13 (Chesterfield, 1988); see also the manuscript volume of his maps held in the Muniments Room at Chatsworth House.

betweene the commons of Taddington and Sheldon p[ar]cell of the Manor of Ashford from the pasture of Sheldon to a place where by reporte a wooden crosse hath been and is now a little hole and certen stones in or near to the same neare to a place called Stirker meares and soe downe to a place at the side of Flagholme And soe descendinge by Monyashfield nooke and from that field nooke upp bole slacke to a quarrye where stone hath beene gotten and to a great greene hillocke and soe to a place called Strifte meare beeinge at or neare the over end of Greenesall racke and soe from Strifte meare downe waterlowe slacke to Kirkbydale bothom where there is a hole whearin by reporte of auncient men a crosse hath beene in ould tyme And wch place where he said a crosse hath beene is the bounder betweene the Lordshipp of Moniash aforesaid all w[hi]ch meares and knowne places have beene accounted to bee the meares and boundes betweene the lo[rdshi]pp of Ashford and the said lordshipps or townes of Taddington and Monyash aforesaid duringe the tyme of this depon[en]ts remembrance and accordinge to these meares direccon was given that the said plot showd bee made but whether the said plot now shewed bee a true plot or noe this depont canot certenly depose because hee can nether write nor reade

For all his illiteracy, William Platts was eminently capable of interpreting his world. For him, the limits of his village ran according to the rise and fall of the land, piles of stones, oral report concerning the former location of (pre-reformation?) crosses, field boundaries, limestone quarries and lead mines. This is not the cadastral, top-down view of John Norden. Rather, it is the vision of an inhabited, known landscape, one walked across, worked on, ploughed over, dug into. It is a vernacular vision of the land and of its past.

The surveyor and cartographer William Senior was well aware that, in surveying and mapping Ashford, he was converting the mental maps of local inhabitants into the textual

products expected of him by his employer, the Earl of Devonshire. Moreover, Senior knew that in producing these documents, he was dependent upon the accumulated lore, knowledge and interpretive insights of people like William Platts. In the same action, Senior explained to the Duchy Court that the map

> now sheweth to this depont is a true plot of Sheldon p[ar]te of the manor of Ashford accordynge to the best skill of this dept who hath practised the arte of plottinge and other mathematicall arts by the space of thirtye yeares last or thereabouts and accordynge to such informacon as was given to this dep[onen]t by [Christo]pher Burrowes George Froste Roger Diccons and othrs of Sheldon aforesaid of the meares m[a]rkes and knowne places menconed in the said plot.

William Senior's experience was likely to have been that of every early modern cartographer. It is difficult to see how any worthwhile estate map or survey could have been produced without the cooperation of the local population.[38] This active popular engagement in cartography was carried to its logical end by the occupational sideline followed by Thomas Gybson of Fytleworth (Sussex) who in 1596 described himself as a 'husbandman and one that useth to measure and survey groundes'; he explained that had recently conducted a survey of the manor of Petworth; he added that he had done so at the 'comaundement' of the lord and the 'direccon' of the tenants.[39]

The map and the survey, then, were not always the blunt product of ruling interests. Popular memories and senses of landscape often fed into their production. Lefebvre's view that dominant modes of production produce dominant visions of landscape leaves little room for popular agency. Yet that agency remains lodged in many of the cartographic and textual

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[38] See, for instance, the participation of the 'antient men of Swaledale' in the lord's perambulation of his bounds: Raistrick and Ashcroft (eds), <u>Documents Relating to the Swaledale estates</u>,131. For other examples, see TNA, E134/6Chas1/Trin8; M.W. Greenslade, <u>The Staffordshire historians</u>, Collections for a history of Staffordshire, 4th ser., 11 (Stoke-on-Trent, 1982), 13-14.

[39] WSRO, PHA 5450, fol. 187r.

expressions of early modern senses of landscape: it is there, because working people consciously and deliberately imprinted it upon the record.[40] James C. Scott has observed that 'Every act of measurement was an act marked by the play of power relations'.[41] The key word here is 'play': Scott is too smart to assert that measurement (or its cartographic representation) represented simply the extension of one sort of power over another; rather, the survey and the map emerged from the complicated melee of contestation, negotiation and compromise.[42] This analysis fits with social historians' work on power relations, which has emphasized the manifold ways in which governor and governed delicately negotiated their relationship.[43] Surveying and cartography should be understood as an element within this process of negotiation. This was apparent to the surveyor of the Bishopric of Hereford's estates in 1581, who commented on the delicacy with which he had approached his subject. His purpose had been 'not … to decide and determyne This or That is a Custome, but to sett downe what I have reade and scene in the same [manorial court] Roles …. That therby the true and perfect Costomes maie be the better observed and kept, and Contention which maie happen betwene the Lorde and Tenantes the better be avoyded'.[44] Much as lords may have wished that the men like William Senior whom they appointed to map and survey their estates would produce documentation that did nothing more than validate their claims upon the land, the muddy, everyday nature of customary arrangements and collective opinion often produced rather more complicated readings of landscape and ownership. Other agents, then, were at work in the production of the map and survey than the scripting hand of the educated

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[40] McRae, God speed the plough, 192, citing the example of Great Bookham (Surrey), the map of which (1614-17) excludes the poor; against this might be cited William senior's maps and surveys cited above, which recount not only the broad swathes of moorland in the Devonshire's Peak manors, but also – on a rood-by-rood basis, the often desparately small pieces of land held by its tenants.

[41] Scott, Seeing like a state, 27.

[42] This could even be true of maps and surveys produced by imperial authorities of subject territories. As Angele Smith observes, for all that nineteenth-century British maps of Ireland were 'official tools of administration and created colonial images of control … they also recorded a local, Irish sense of place, identity and belonging'. See her 'Landscape representation: place and identity in nineteenth-century ordnance survey maps of Ireland', in P.J. Stewart and A. Strathern (eds.), Landscape, memory and place (London, 2003), 75.

[43] Braddick and Walter (eds.), Negotiating power.

[44] Bannister, 'Manorial customs', 218-19.

cartographer. Most importantly, we have seen the role played by plebeian inhabitants in guiding the cartographer around what was, for them, an intimately known landscape. The interests of subordinate groups might in this way work their way under the lens of the elite view, producing a subtly modified version of place. We need, then, to look <u>beneath</u> the surface of the map, the survey and the lord's custumal, feeling for the hard-edged confrontations and subtle negotiations that underwrote their production.

II

Ordering and remembering sacred space

For early modern people, the material environment − especially the monuments, buildings, tombs, relics and field systems left by earlier generations − carried powerful, complex and sometimes conflicting meanings. England's protestant reformations entailed frequent conflict over medieval altars, statues, paintings and crosses. These bore heavily upon the relationship between collective memory, material culture and ideas of the sacred. This was very clear in one corner of Cheshire in 1613. In that year, the Court of Star Chamber heard complaint against a godly gentleman, John Bruen, who had smashed seven ancient stone crosses that stood at crossroads or in churchyards within Delamere Forest.[45] The complaint stated that 'by all the time whereof the memorie of man is not to the contrarie' the 'Anncient Crosses' that had stood at the cross-roads had formed important 'markes, boundaries and meares' between parishes and manors within the Forest. These crosses, the complaint continued, 'were by reverent Antiquitie first erected and sett upp out of good zeale and charitie'. In May 1613, claiming to effect a 'Reformacon of diverse abuses and sup[er]sticons' within the Forest, Bruen and his supporters had smashed the crosses, exclaiming to the angry locals 'that theire

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[45] TNA, STAC8/21/6. For more on Bruen, see W. Hinde, <u>A faithfull remonstrance of the holy life and happy death of John Bruen</u> (1641). For a very similar case, see WSA, 1780/8.

dagon was fallen'. The foresters threatened to avenge Bruen's iconoclasm 'by force and by clubbe lawe' if they had not justice at law. Called before the county Bench, Bruen had defied the magistrates, saying that he and his supporters were 'honest and sanctifyed men and verie godly and most religious'.

John Bruen's answer was still more revealing of the passions provoked by differing readings of sanctified space, structures and boundaries. Bruen stately forthrightly that he had indeed smashed the crosses, arguing that they were 'defended and advaunced by sundry professed papistes and recusants and by such of the comon people as are or have bene adicted to the Romane Religion', and that the crosses 'are and have bene supersticiously and idolatrously worshipped and adored'. One of Bruen's collaborators, William Dale, went on:

> he hath seene and knowne both in his childhood and since sundry schollers of the schooles in [Cheshire] … instructed and directed by the Masters of the … schooles at certain tymes or seisons in the yeare and namely in the weeke called the Crosse Weeke to resort to some of the … crosses and there to make or recyte certeine prayers unto or before the same Crosses

Bruen's iconoclasm, then, was provoked not only by the reminder that the crosses represented of the old religion, but also by their continuing employment in the customs of 'Crosse Weeke' – that is, the perambulation of parochial bounds at Rogationtide.

Rogationtide was an ancient Christian ceremony, taking place over the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Ascension Week. Also known as 'beating the bounds', parishioners followed their minister around the parochial boundaries, pausing at certain landmarks – meerstones, field boundaries, 'gospel trees' - to pray for the protection of the parochial boundaries and to sing psalms. The priest was expected to read Deuteronomy 27:17 - 'Cursed be he that

removeth his neighbour's land marks' – and to bless the crops.[46] Parishioners cleared any

obstructions to the bounds. On occasion this could provide a cover for the riotous destruction

of enclosures. Thus, when the parishioners of Jacobean Colby (Lincolnshire) encountered an

enclosyre across their common during their Ascension Day perambulation, they threw it

down, arguing that they were their bounds, 'to the end [that] the Auncient bounders of all the

said p[ar]ishe should not be blemished extinguished nor obscured but be kepte and

p[re]served in memory and soe lefte in memory to the younger sorte of the people of the said

parishe of Colby and to be continued to posterity for ever'.[47] For some, Rogationtide carried

with it associations of pre-reformation Catholicism: puritan ministers were hostile to the

ritual and in some cases would frustrate their parishioners by refusing to carry out their

allotted role in the ceremonies.[48] Religious conservatives, in contrast, were keen on

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[46] For an eighteenth-century discussion of Rogationtide, see BL, Add Ms 24544, fols. 101v-6r.

[47] TNA, STAC8/163/30. For another example, see TNA, STAC8/98/7. For the disruption of a Rogationtide route by an enclosure, see TNA, DL4/32/26. For the removal of blockages to a perambulations, see Norfolk RO, BL/IC/2/17; Nottingham University Library, Pw1/399. For inter-communal conflict during Rogationtide, see W. Hunt, The puritan moment: the coming of revolution in an English county (Cambridge, Mass., 1983), 132-3. For Rogationtide under the reformed Church, see W.H. Frere and W.M. Kennedy (eds.), Visitation articles and injunctions of the Reformation period, 3 vols., Alcuin Club Collections (London, 1910), III, 160, 164, 177, 208, 264, 290, 308-9, 334, 378.

[48] For an example, see Hunt, Puritan moment, 134. For Rogationtide, see S. Hindle, 'Beating the bounds of the parish: order, memory and identity in the English local community, c. 1500–1700' in M. Halvorson and K. Spierling (eds.), Defining community in early modern Europe (Ashgate: ALDERSHOT?, 2008/9), 205-27; M. Beresford, History on the ground: six studies in maps and landscapes (London, 1971), 28-9; Emmison, 'Tithes', Emmison and Stephens (eds.), Tribute, 177-216. David Underdown has identified a decline in the celebration of Rogationtide in the early seventeenth century: seer his Revel, riot and rebellion, 80-82. The evidence of equity and church court depositions points to the continuing vitality of Rogationtide in some communities throughout and beyond our period. For the observation of Rogationtide in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Bushaway, By rite, 81-7; D. Fletcher, 'The parish boundary: a social phenomenon in Hanoverian England', Rural History, 14, 2 (2003), 177-9. Alun Howkins has argued that Rogationtide was one of a series of 'High Church' rituals that were reinvented by the Anglican church in the later nineteenth century: A. Howkins, Reshaping rural England, 1850-1925: a social history (London, 1991). For some examples of eighteenth and nineteenth perambulations, see H. Smith, 'Two perambulations of White Roding – 1615 and 1610', The Essex Review, 44 (1935), 222-227; M. Christy, 'A perambulation of the parish of Chignal St. James in 1797', The Essex Review, 36 (1927), 60-71; C.B. Sworder, 'A perambulation of Epping parish, 1762', The Essex Review, 36 (1927), 135-40; C.F.D. Sperling, 'The perambulation of Great Maplestead', The Essex Review, 20 (1911), 101-106; A. Clark, 'Terling perambulations, 1770-1810' The Essex Review, 20 (1911), 14-29; T. Storey Maskelyne, 'Perambulation of Purton, 1733', Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine, 40 (1917-19), 119-28; G.C. Peachey, 'Beating the bounds of Brightwater', Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Archaeological Journal, 10, 3 (1904), 75-81. For the antiquity of parochial boundaries, see A.H.J. Baines, 'Beating the bounds: Rogationtide at Waddesdon', Records of Buckinghamshire, 41 (2001), 143-64; for the antiquity of manorial boundaries, see K. Barker and D.R. Seaward, 'Boundaries and landscape in Blackmoor: the Tudor manors of Holnest, Hilfield and Hermitage', Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Proceedings, 112 (1990), 5-22.

Rogationtide, since it seemed to them to link the unchanging ceremony and mystery of the Church to the ritual depiction of the parish as a stable, static social entity.[49] For some Rogationtide carried magical associations. John Aubrey noted that the 'common people' believed that when the minister blessed springs and pools during Rogationtide, the effect was to improve the flow of water. A 'very ancient' salt well called Old Brine in the salt-producing town of Nantwich (Cheshire), for instance, was blessed on Rogationtide.[50]

Rogationtide celebrated the social and spatial unity of the parish. The Elizabethan homily concerning Rogationtide contained four parts: three concerned God's gifts to humanity; the fourth identified the social ideals according to which the ritual was meant to operate. Parishioners were exhorted to maintain the ancient boundaries of the parish and to avoid discord. Coveting or encroaching upon a neighbour's land, using false weights and measures, oppressing rightful owners of land or hurting the poor were all abhorrent to the Almighty.[51] Descriptions of parochial permabulations survive in some abundance, often amongst parish records, sometimes even written into the registers of baptisms, marriages and burials. Their survival points to the significance of written accounts of perambulations as enduring statements of communal boundaries. Each is unique; yet there are generic similarities.

The perambulation that took place between 11th and 13th May 1629 of the boundaries of the parish of Cuckfield (Sussex) is unusual in that it is prefaced by a list of some of those men who 'with other inhabitants' went the bounds over those three days. The processioners met in the churchyard where they sang the 24th psalm. At the end of the first day, they sang Psalm 50. The following day the parishioners started off with the first four verses of Psalm 65. On

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[49] For puritan and conservative attitudes to Rogationtide, see Thomas, <u>Religion and the decline of magic</u>, 71-4.

[50] BL, Add Ms 24544, fols. 102r, 115v, 134r.

[51] M.E. Rickey and T.B. Stroup (eds), <u>Certain sermons or homilies appointed to be read in churches; Certaine sermons or Homilies, appointed to be read in churches, in the time of Queen Elizabeth I, 1547-1571</u> (1623; 2nd.ed., Gainesville, Fla, 1968), 217-238.

that day, they took in 'a great stup or stump of an old stame of a great oake, which oake (before the fall of it) as is sayd was called the Priests oake; the oake once having three great boughs or armes reaching into 3 parishes Cockfield, Slugham and Balcomb.' They finished the day by singing Psalm 65. On the last day, the processioners started off with the 85th Psalm. Reaching the common, they came to the stump of a beech 'joyning to a the hedg very neare. From which stump or stame walking between two oaken tilloes on both which were marks set for remembrance.' Finally, they came to 'Nashe gate againe where we began. Where thanking God for his mercie and praising his holie name by singing the 67 Psalme wee came along through the Park and lanes till wee came to the Churchyard where setting ourselves in order as wee did at the first wee went singing lustily and with a good courage towards the Vicarage the remainder of the 85 Psalme beginning at the 7 verse'.[52]

The transliteration of the bounds of Cuckfield encoded a living social practice, providing those who succeeded the generation of 1629 with usable documentation as to the limits of their parish. It supplied the basis, for instance, to the perambulation of the bounds in 1702. The minister of that year paid particular attention to singing the psalms as had been used by his early Stuart predecessor. He also noted the treats that were handed to the processioners: 'We came to Pain's Place and were kindly refreshes by Mr Rob. Norden, still owner of it: after which we sung in the Hall Psalm 42 in Babylon tune because we desired of him so to do, not for the fitness of the Psalm to the occasion, but for the sake of the tune'. Noting that some of the oak trees that had functioned as boundary markers, including the Priest's Oak, had been cut down, the minister recorded that the perambulation finished with dinner and his dispensation of some pennys to the boys who had accompanied them.[53]

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[52] M.H. Cooper, 'A perambulation of Cuckfield, 1629', <u>Sussex Archaeological Collections</u>, 61 (1920), 46, 50, 51.

[53] J.H. Cooper, 'The vicars and parish of Cuckfield', <u>Sussex Archaeological Collections</u>, 50 (1908), 14, 15.

Rogationtide celebrated social harmony: in 1597, the minister of Manchester called upon his parishioners 'both rich and poor, if they desired the preservation of love and their parish rights and liberties, to accompany him in his perambulation'.[54] Read in the context of the swiftly-moving social changes that were reshaping many early modern communities, this was powerful stuff, generating a set of legitimating reference points that were lodged in a particular reading of the past. For some, Rogationtide expressed key elements within the customary mentality: it was about preventing change, ossifying social structures, idealizing social relations and bonding collective memory to a distinctively local sense of place. As Steven Justice puts it, Rogationtide constituted a 'communal mnemonic', one that reinforced the identification of the individual with the community; it was a ritual that

> made the community visible as a <u>population</u> − displayed the village to itself − while recalling and making visible the community as a <u>locality</u>, a place and a unit of production, the source of subsistence whose integrity and equilibrium was essential to survival. The community was a community because of the place that sustained it.[55]

Over and beyond this linkage between memory, place and collective identity lay an implied claim about the past: that whereas early modern society seemed to be characterized by conflict, avarice and greed, the social bonds of past times had been based upon paternalism and reciprocity. All of this was bonded to a particular place. This distinct use of the past was mythic: it formed a '"charter for contemporary action whose legitimacy derives from its very association with the cultural past'.[56]

In depositions recorded in 1594 and 1596, old men who had been brought up in New Buckenham (Norfolk) well remembered the days when they had gone on Rogationtide

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[54] J. Eglington Bailey, 'Dr John Dee, warden of Manchester (1595 to 1608), Part IV', <u>Local gleanings relating to Lancashire and Cheshire</u>, IV (October, 1879), 131.

[55] Justice, <u>Writing and rebellion</u>, 165. For ritual and memory, see Connerton, <u>How societies remember</u>.

[56] A.P. Cohen, <u>The symbolic construction of community</u> (London, 1985), 99; see also P.S. Cohen, 'Theories of myth', <u>Man</u>, new ser., 4, 1 (1969), 337-53.

processions in that village. Richard Sturdinance recalled how 'in auncyent tyme' the parishioners used to process with their neighbours from Old Buckenham to the gardens of Buckenham castle, 'and there drinkinge went to dambridge togither and there p[ar]ted'. He well remembered how, when he had been a 'scoller' 60 years before, he had taken part in these processions. Others remembered their own youthful role in the ecclesiastical aspects of the ritual: Bartholomew Dabbes had carried the parish banner; Thomas Neave had been a 'singing boye and was used to helpe to singe the p[ro]cession'. The 68-year old Thomas Rutland recalled how he had combined boozy good fellowship with pious bell-ringing, explaining that 'he better remembreth' the route of the procession 'for that he hath druncke beare out of an hande bell' while on the procession. Peter Underwood remembered that 'the drinkinge in that p[er]ambulacon were made att a field end called the hawehead neare to sheepmeare uppon the comon there'. For John Roberts, downing beer formed an especially memorable part of the ritual: he recalled how 'there was usuallye sett a firkin of bere for the p[ro]cession of Newe Buckenham to drinke'. Underwood added that his knowledge of the bounds was validated by what he had heard years ago from 'ould and auncyent men'.[57]

The New Buckenham depositions highlight some fundamental aspects of Rogationtide. Most obviously, the beating of the bounds was a ritual of belonging. Celebrating good cheer – what Shakespeare's Sir Toby Belch calls 'cakes and ale' - while singing psalms and marching behind the minister, choirboys and parish banner linked Christian amity with communal fellowship, reinforcing social bonds.[58] Such neighbourliness did not necessarily exclude the

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[57] Quoting NRO, PD254/171 and TNA, E133/8/1234. For more on the dispute that generated this case, see TNA, E112/30/118; TNA, E134/37&38Eliz/Mich/62; TNA, E134/38Eliz/Hil/24; TNA, TNA, E134/34 Eliz/Hil/11; TNA, E134/42Eliz/Hil/15; TNA, E178/1612. Witnesses from other Norfolk villages at this time had similar memories: see TNA, DL4/18/37; TNA, E178/1587.

[58] The consumption of food and beer was an essential component in other communities as well: when the perambulators of Epping (Essex) reached a tavern called the Cock and Pye, 'according to Ancient Custom' the vicar gave them breakfast; when they completed the perambulation, the lord of the manor had to give them dinner. Sworder, 'Perambulation', 137-8. See also TNA, STAC8/98/7. For Sir Toby Belch, see Twelfth Night, 2. III, 107. I am grateful to Simon Sandall for advice on this point.

nearby settlements; New Buckenham had a long-standing feud with Carlton, with whom they were at odds over the boundaries of their commons; but they rubbed well enough with the folk of Old Buckenham. And so they joined those neighbours as part of their Rogationtide celebrations.[59] Rogationtide idealized social relations: in the memories of the old men, Buckenham Castle, the seat of the Knyvett family, was the location for one of the moments of ritual drinking. The Knyvetts were thereby associated with the values of good lordship: conviviality, generosity and hospitality. Memories were selective: Sir Edmund Knyvett had been besieged in Buckenham Castle by the rebellious commons during Kett's rebellion.[60] Lastly, as the old men looked back on their earlier times, it was apparent that Rogationtide afforded a special place to the young. As Sir John Hawkins was to put it, the function of perambulations was to 'perpetuate the memory of [parish]…boundaries, and to impress the remembrance thereof in the minds of young persons, especially boys'.[61] Only very rarely were girls mentioned as having taken part in the perambulations (not the same thing, of course, as meaning that they were not there). From their of point of view, this may have been no bad thing, as they watched their brothers being whipped, thumped, pinched or turned upside down by the older men in order to imprint in their consciousness the turning points in the parochial bounds.[62]

This social function of memorialization could, from the young lads' point of view, be rather painful. The boys of New Buckenham were lucky to have been treated to beer at the bounds – many other boys were beaten at key points of the procession. Both practises were intended to

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[59] For more on this topic, see K.E. Wrightson, 'The "decline of neighbourliness" revisited', in N. L. Jones and D. Woolf (eds), Local identities in late medieval and early modern England (Basingstoke, 2007), 19-49; idem., 'Mutualities and obligations: changing social relationships in early modern England', Proceedings of the British Academy, 139 (2006), 157-94.

[60] R. Holinshed, Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland 6 vols. (1577 & 1586; new. ed., London, 1808), III, 969.

[61] J. Brand, Observations on popular antiquities, 3 vols (London, 1813), I, 175

[62] The 1762 account of the bounds of Epping (Essex) noted the names of the boys that were 'bumped' at each turning point. Sworder, 'Perambulation', 135-40.

impress knowledge of the bounds upon the young. In 1592, looking back on his youth, the 80 year-old husbandman John Martine of Marke (Somerset) remembered how

> beinge a boye about th[e] age of tenn years amongst other boyes of the said parishe of Marke was requyred by aged men of the sayd parishe to goe alone with them to the bounds of … Marke … where dyvers of the sayd boyes had pence given them & others had stripes to th[e] ende as he takethe it that they shoulde remember the sayde boundes.[63]

It was the custom of Chelsea (Middlesex) that the churchwardens should recompence 'the boys that were whipt' on the perambulations with some cash.[64] In 1733, at various points in the bounds of Purton (Wiltshire) 'money [was] thrown amongst the boys and to Every person there present was given Cakes and Ale'.[65] Then there were men like Robert Fidler who recalled in 1635 how as a boy he 'had his eares pulled and was set on his heads upon a mearestone neere to a newe ditch on Ormiskirke Moore and had his head knocked to the same stone to the end to make him the better to remember that the same stone was a boundary stone'.[66]

The perambulation of the bounds of the manor of Leathley (Yorkshire) presented the boys of that village with an opportunity to try out their marksmanship. In 1575, the 72-year old Robert Brodebelt recalled how 'he beinge [then] A boye of twelve years of age' had rode the bounds with the Earle of Northumberland

> At wch tyme the saide Earle procured the bounders of the saide maner to be openlye redd in the hearinge of this deponent and of dyvers others. And after the readinge therof, the saide Earle did commande one Richarde Longfelowe (beinge then a boye) to shote at the

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[63] TNA, E134/34Eliz/East21.
[64] Brand, Observations, I, 175.
[65] Storey Maskelyne, 'Perambulation of Purton', 123.
[66] A. Winchester, Discovering parish boundaries (Princes Risborough, 1990), 37.

saide stone called Whitnotstone, whereupon the said boye did shote at the same, and brake his arrowe upon yt, and hadd foure pence of silver of the saide Earle for his labor Humfrey Hodgson was also a witness to Richard Longfellow's marksmanship, remembering many years later that the Earl had then presented Richard with his four pence, before saying to the assembled processioners 'Remember these bounders an other daie to be the bounders between the Forrest and the maner of Leathley'. Hodgson remembered the 'writinge' which confirmed the bounds as bearing 'a Seall wch was redd at that tyme', adding that boundaries were confirmed by his father, 'beinge a man of fyvescore years and tenn of age' at his death.[67] In perambulations, late childhood and adolescence constituted the time at which senses of self were inscribed within a distinct locality defined by communal memory.

Fundamental to the beating of the bounds was its physical, sensory quality: old men and women had clear memories of touching boundary markers. At one point in the bounds of Epping (Essex), it was recalled that it had not been possible to 'bump' the boys, and so one of them knocked his hat against the tree, so marking the turning point.[68] In 1616, Roger Hudson knew the boundary between Birling and Amble (Northumberland) because his father had always made him strike the bounder stone with his stick as he walked past it.[69] In 1753, John Hatfield recalled how, 50 years earlier, he had ridden the bounds of Penistone (Yorkshire). He and his companions began their journey at Blakeroyds, 'laying their hands upon the wall'. A similarly feeling was recorded by four Penistone men in 1557; they noted that they regularly drove their cattle to Anot Cross (a boundary marker) and there one of their number 'saytt upon the…crosse & rede X chapitr of Mark aurelye'.[70] John Pryncrose of Stoke (Cheshire) remembered in 1581 that 'in tyme of bearing the crosse and banners', his

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[67] TNA, DL4/17/39. See also TNA, DL4/18/39A.
[68] Sworder, 'Perambulation', 138.
[69] TNA, E134/13JasI/Mich4.
[70] J.N. Dransfield, A history of the parish of Penistone (Penistone, 1906), 32, 48-9. Mark 10.21-25 contains a powerful critique of the rich.

neighbours used to process the bounds of their parish, meeting the inhabitants of the next-door settlement at a brook, adding that 'he hath carred the said crosse and his father before him and set yt downe in the said brook'.[71] The renewal of the bounds also involved the renewal of markers: in 1572, it was recalled that the monks of Laund priory and the local inhabitants every year would carve crosses into the soil at key points in the bounds, and 'at eche of the said crosses they dyd Reade a Gospell'.[72] The trunks of oak trees were often cut into with the parish mark. Processing on from Scholar's Cross to the Upper and Lower Procession Oaks, the parishioners of Purton (Wiltshire) would hear the gospels read. Then, the old men the 'old men weare wont to saye to the younger sorte Looke boyes heare be trees marked for the boundaries of our p[ar]ishe take an hatchet and nowe marke the'.[73]As Nicola Whyte puts it, 'Observing [boundary markers] was not enough; physical experience and sensory associations were vital to the sustainability of mnemonic languages'.[74] Local custom, then, was more than a set of ideas and practices. Custom was <u>heard</u>: not just in the reading aloud of manorial by-laws, but also in the singing of the psalms on parish permabulations, or in the words of elders, enjoining their grandchildren to remember the bounds. Custom was <u>done</u>: digging crosses in the earth, carving parish signs in oak trees. And custom was <u>felt</u>: in the full stomach and woozy head after cakes and beer had been handed out; or in aching muscles after several miles' walk around the bounds of the parish or manor. All of this amounted to a set of 'incorporative' practices which involved 'performative ceremonies which generate bodily sensory and emotional experiences, resulting in habitual memory being sedimented in the body'.[75]

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[71] TNA, E134/23&24Eliz/Mich1.

[72] TNA, E134/14&15Eliz/Mich12.

[73] TNA, E134/13&14Chas I/Hil 21.

[74] N.M. Whyte, 'Landscape, memory and custom: parish identities c.1550 – 1700', <u>Social History</u>, 32 2 (2007), 175.

[75] Y. Hamilakis, 'Eating the dead: mortuary feasting and the politics of memory in the Aegean Bronze Age societies' in K. Branigan (ed.), <u>Cemetry and society in the Aegean Bronze age</u> (1995), 117. See also Connerton, <u>How societies remember</u>, 72-104; M. Hokari, 'Gurindji mode of historical practice', in L. Taylor, G.K. Ward, G. Henderson, R. Davis and L.A. Wallis (eds), <u>The power of knowledge, the resonance of tradition</u> (Canhberra,

In 1738, the 92 year-old Yorkshireman Christopher Slater recalled how he had been present at the riding of the manorial bounds of Melmerby and Agglethorpe. Eighty years earlier, he had been at the riding along with a bunch of boys, each of whom was presented with a green ribbon by Mrs Anne Topham, the lady of the manor, to wear at their britch's knees. In case the boys missed the point, 'those were given at the Bounder stones that were most remarkable to each boy to cause them to remember the Bounders'. Mrs. Topham's gift built upon still earlier memories: also present at the riding of the bounds 'were old Antient Men … who then bid the young ladds remember the Bounders, and declare that they had been so riden all their time and as they had heard old people declare before them'.[76] Christopher Slater's memories interlocked community, place and custom. The effect was to cascade memories down the generations. The 60 year-old Staffordshire husbandman Thomas Smythe knew this clearly enough, explaining to the Exchequer court in 1598 how he was enmeshed in a web of recollections that reached back into the past and forwards into the future. 'Ev[er] sythence he could knowe townes', explained Smythe, he had known Colefield common: 'O[u]r fathers in the p[er]ambulacone for Shenston have led us and we o[u]r children rownd about the greatest pte of the waste grownde'.[77]

Such accounts constituted another key aspect of the customary mentality, constructing memory as collective, ancient and consistent over the years and as plotted within specific sites. The role played by old people in instructing younger generations was sufficiently important to creep into some custumals. Thus, the 1653 record of the customs of the manor of Aller (Somerset) linked manorial to parochial bounds, both of them legitimated with

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2005), 214-5 . For history and the senses, see P.C. Hoffer, <u>Sensory worlds in early America</u> (Baltimore, Maryland, 2003).

[76] BL, Add MS 33061, fol. 133r.

[77] TNA, E134/39&40Eliz/Mich21.

reference to what 'our forefathers' had to say on the topic. The custumal went on to describe how the boundaries of some commons and woods had been included in the

> p[er]ambulation way of the Parishioners of Aller and that the Old men and women going there in procession did often times charge and command their children Boys & Girls and the other young folks to remember it rebuking such as did Transgress or go out of the sd way in their said p[er]ambulations[78]

Kinship links were central to the living connection between landscape and memory, such that 'the landscape provide[d] a continuous reminder of the relationship between the living and past generations... the continued use of places through time draws attention to the historically constituted connections which exist between members of a community'.[79]

The imprinting of social memory in space was deliberate, consistent and thorough. In 1611, the Northamptonshire labourer Thomas Ferman knew that a piece of land called The Brand lay in the parish of Newton because for 60 years he had gone on the perambulation of that parish, and 'he can yet goe to the places wheare they have usually made there crosses and said there gospells'.[80] The reading of the landscape impressed on collective memory by Rogationtide could be very exact: Robert Plot noted 'an odd custom' at Stanlake (Oxfordshire), where 'the Parson in the Procession about holy Thursday, reads a Gospel at a Barrels head in the Cellar of the Chequer Inn, where some say there was formerly a Hermitage; others, that there was anciently a Cross, at which they read a Gospel in former times, over which now the house, and particularly the cellar being built, they are forced to perform it in manner as above'.[81] Placenames similarly suggest something of how memory of

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[78] SRO, D/P/all/23; see also SRO, DD/C/124.
[79] J. Thomas, 'Archaeologies of place and landscape', in I. Hodder (ed.) Archaeological theory today (Cambridge, 2001), 175.
[80] TNA, E178/4318.
[81] Plot, Natural history, 203.

ancient activity was preserved in the present.[82] Countless villages, for example, were crossed by trackways named for their pre-Reformation use: 'Abbey field'; 'pilgrim's way'; 'Whitefriars lane'; 'gospel croft'; ''the monkewall'. In the eighteenth century, a spring in Fersfield (Norfolk) retained the name of 'Tann's Well', a corruption of St Anne's well; before the Reformation, in the parish church there had been a chapel dedicated to that Saint.[83] A house in Arlingham (Gloucestershire) was still known in 1639 as 'our Ladies preists house' because the priest who officiated at a chantry dedicated to the Virgin Mary had lived there.[84] John Aubrey noted how local tradition claimed that St Oswald had been slain by Penda on the great down east of Marsfield (Gloucestershire). The place therefore acquired the name of St Oswald's Down; when shepherds put their sheep on the down they prayed to St Oswald for the safe return of their animals.[85]

As Alexandra Walsham has brilliantly demonstrated, for generations after the official triumph of Protestantism, survivals of the pre-reformation landscape continued to underline perceptions of the material world.[86] The evidence of customary law strongly validates her argument. In 1632, the limits of the Forest of Barnwood (Buckinghamshire) were known by a sequence of meerstones and crosses and by an Oak called 'Crosse Oake'.[87] Articles of agreement dated 1626 for the enclosure of the commons of Elmley Castle (Worcestershire) recited the bounds of the soon-to-be-extinct common land, which included 'an Antyent Crosse uppon the toppe of the hill'.[88] Even where such wayside crosses had been removed in the course of the Reformation, memories of their location endured. The bounds of the

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[82] For an example, see Gough, Myddle, 68.
[83] F. Blomefield, An essay towards a topography of the county of Norfolk 7 vols. (Norwich, 1806), I, 105; Bodl Lib, Gough Middlesex 4, pp. 46-7.
[84] Maclean (ed.), Berkeley Manuscripts, III, 68.
[85] BL, Lansdowne 231, fol. 113v.
[86] Walsham, Reformation of the landscape.
[87] TNA, E134/6&7Chas1/Hil18.
[88] Warwickshire RO, L3/545

Somerset manor of Medgeley in 1558, for instance, included 'the foundacon of a stoninge crosse lyinge in the playne moore unto another foundacon of another stoninge crosse lyinge alsoe in the playne moore and soe still Eastward as the caseway doth lye to Councells cross'.[89] One 67-year-old yeoman of Norton (Yorkshire) recalled in 1580 that the 'moor called Setrington le moore' lay east of what he described as 'a decayed stone cross'.[90] In 1641, turning points in the manorial bounds of Baslow and Bubnell (Derbyshire) included 'a standinge stone wth a Crosse on it' and, 'at the head of hippersleye' a spot 'where stood a wooden crosse'.[91] An account of the bounds of the Sussex manors of Woolavington and East Dean in 1675 also identified a series of crosses as boundary markers; the lord's park was highlighted as an important turning point, as also were five heaps of stones.[92] The eighty-year old carpenter John Pyn of the Devon village of Sidbury explained how the boundary with the nearby community of Ottery was known by 'great heapes and burrowes of stones lyinge neere the edge of Ottery hill'.[93] From Middleham (Yorkshire) it was reported in 1575 that the ancient metes and bounds that divided the manor from the nearby settlement of Aglethorpe included a 'hepe of stones or the stone Roccle'.[94] The memory of the ownership of woodland in Trowell (Nottinghamshire) remained written onto the land in the shape of a ditch 'wch said olde dytche ... doth style at thys day Remayne to the notyss of all me[n]'.[95] In the churchyard of seventeenth-century Whalley (Lancashire) it was noted that 'there were crosses … of stone, popularly called Cruces beati Augustini and are so called to this day'.[96] Such structures were bearers of a distinct sense of the past, local markers of the retention of some fragments of an earlier religious culture.

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[89] SRO, DD/SAS/C/795/PR/462.
[90] TNA, E134/22Eliz/Trin9.
[91] TNA, DL4/98/34.
[92] WSRO, Lavington/3 unfoliated
[93] TNA, E134/5Jas1/Mich1.
[94] TNA, E134/17Eliz/East6.
[95] Nottingham University Library, Mi2/72/8.
[96] H. Taylor, 'The ancient crosses of Lancashire', Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, 18 (1900), 15.

Standing structures and marks upon the land therefore helped to preserve a memory of the years before the reformation. They also constructed the dissolution of the monastic houses and of the chantries as moments of profound disruption. In 1569, a sequence of witnesses from the Nottinghamshire village of Lenton recalled how the abbots of the monastic house of that name had guarded their rights of access over their land, hanging chains across certain lanes and tracks in order to ensure that even the local gentry were required to ask the abbott's permission to use the lanes. This formed part of a wider spiritual landscape which endured into the present: Robert Phyppes, a Lenton husbandman gave testimony in the same case as to the boundaries between the manors of Lenton and Radford, adding that 'this he saythe to be trewe by reason that the procession went all that waie and that two priestes then called Sr willm denies of Radford and thother Sr Robte mawborne vicar of lenton Robte Earle Edmond Eperston beinge either of thage of lxx yeres at the leaste and div[er]s other auncyent men being theare present then sayd that the same waye was the very trew boundes of the said manor of Lenton & Radford. And willed all those wch were theare present to beare wytnes of theire say[i]nge'.[97] Some memories of pre-reformation sacred sanctuaries could be quite dramatic. The 72 year-old Hugh Hooper of Witham (Somerset) remembered in 1620 how 'an auncient gent named Cavell told this dep[onen]t divers yeares since that he the said Cavell had killed a man by misadventure at a place called Bishopscrowe & there upon fleing towards Witham to claime the priveledge of the Sanctuarie there was p[ur]sued & taken before he could come wthin anie of the inclosed grounds of the said priorie but the Prior sent for him backe againe & there kept him by the space of a yeare afterwards and saith that the

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[97] Nottingham University Library, Mi1/38/9.

said Mr Cavell told him the reason that moved the Prior soe to have him backe was for that he was taken in the priviledged grounde of the Prior'.[98]

In some places, the meanings attached to pre-reformation landscape features gradually dissipated; elsewhere, they were kept alive. In 1622, William Burton noted the enduring meaning attached to one particular piece of the former monastic landscape, observing that when Augustinian nuns established a their house at Gracedieu (Leicestershire), they had the building 'compassed round with a high and strong stone wall, within which the Nunnes had made a Garden, in resemblance of that upon Mount Olives Gethsemane'. Burton likened this to Sinai Park in Staffordshire, where the abbot of Burton-on-Trent, seeing in this nearby heath the ecological equivalent of the 'rough wildnernesse' of Sinai, named it such. Thus, memories of rich symbolism of the monastic landscape remained preserved in place-names and topography, such that the meanings they communicated remained alive in an apparently protestantized world.[99] The land thereby remained a bearer of a semiotic code inherited from medieval catholicism. The effect was not only to sustain fragments of a catholic culture, but also to maintain a rich set of local meanings in the face of national processes of religious homogenization.

The parish bounds and the parish church formed part of the same mnemonic system: the clerk of North Benfleet (Essex) recognized this when, in 1587, he followed his description of the perambulation of that year with a detailed discussion of the ordering of the pews within the church, noting the assignation of each pew to a particular landholding. All of this was recorded for future use in the parish register. The clerk had recorded the coincidence of a set

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[98] TNA, E134/17Jas1/Hil9.
[99] Burton, Description of Leicestershire, 104.

of mnemonics which taken together mapped topography onto tenure and social place.[100]

Memories of the pre-Reformation church could endure, enriching local senses of the past and defining the Reformation as a decisive rupture. Thus, for instance, in 1593 the older inhabitants of Methley (Yorkshire) could still remember how a certain pew had been designated 'for the westhouse where the alter of Sainte Nicholas stood' and 'the first stall on the North side where the alter of Sainte Margarets stood'.[101]

We are able to gain some fuller insight into the emplotment of memory and social place within the parish church thanks to the record of disputes heard at church courts over former chantry lands, responsibility for the upkeep of particular areas of the church (most notably, the chancel), burial rights and conflicts over seating arrangements.[102] All of these topics were regulated by parochial custom. Where disputes arose, like in actions before equity courts, depositions were taken from aged inhabitants as to the use of the church in the past. The large bulk of church court witnesses were of non-gentle status. Yet disputes over chancels and church pews often set one member of the local gentry against another. The consistory court

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[100] H. Smith, 'Early registers of North Benfleet and Nevendon', Essex Review, 42 (1933), 62-3.

[101] JRL, Lat Ms 249, fol. 16v. For more on Methley at this time, see BL, Add MS 38599. I hope to write more fully about this village in the future.

[102] For the latter topic, see Underdown, Revel, riot and rebellion, 29-33; Ingram, Church courts, 111-122; C. Marsh, 'Order and place in England 1560–1640: the view from the pew' in Journal of British Studies, 44 (2005), 3-26; idem., 'Sacred space in England 1560–1640: the view from the pew' in Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 53 (2002), 286-311; A. Flather, Gender and space in early modern England (Woodbridge, 2007), 135-73; idem., The politics of place: a study of church seating in Essex, c.1580-1640, Friends of the Department of English Local History, 3 (Leicester, 1999); D. Dymond, 'Sitting apart in church', in C. Rawcliffe, R. Virgoe and R. Wilson (eds.), Counties and communities: essays on East Anglian history presented to Hassell Smith (Norwich, 1996), 213-24; S. Amussen, An ordered society: gender and class in early modern England (Oxford, 1988), 137-44; R. Tittler, 'Seats of honour, seats of power: the symbolism of public seating in the English urban community, c.1560-1620', Albion, 24, 2 (2002), 205-23. Pews also, of course, were ordered according to gender; but in my small selection of cases I have not found any dealing with the gendered order of the church. Nonetheless, it is apparent that the arrangement of the parish church reflected patriarchal as well as class hierarchies. Men and women sat on different sides of the nave, 'according to their status and conditions'. In some churches, special pews were set aside for midwives and women who were to be churched. W.J. Presset, 'Some seating experiences in Essex churches (during Elizabethan and Stewart times)', The Essex Review, 35 (1926), 5, 9. For the medieval context, see P. Graves, 'Social space in the English medieval parish church', Economy and Society, 18, 3 (1989), 297-322; J. Merritt, 'The social context of the parish church in early modern Westminster', Urban History Yearbook (1991), 20-31.

testimonies therefore allow us historical access to the ways in which common people read elite uses of space.

As we have seen, there was nothing <u>inherently</u> plebeian about custom. Thus, some late seventeenth-century notes penned by the baronet Sir John Gell justified the placement of wealthier male householders' pews in the high-status area near the pulpit according to such practice 'time out of minde'; meanwhile, according to 'custom', the 'comon & vulgar seats' were distributed by the minister or churchwarden.[103] In 1636, the seating arrangements of Ashbourne church (Derbyshire) were rearranged. Overseers were appointed 'for placing the ordinary sort of people in such seats as might be fittest for their degree and according to the payment of their levies to the repair of the church: as he that paid most had the uppermost seat and so every one was seated according to their own proportion'.[104] Social place was plotted in the church of later seventeenth-century Castleton (Derbyshire), the nave of which was divided into box pews; the most prominent of the pews were taken by the leading sheep farmers and lead merchants. In an explicit statement of their ownership, their occupants carved into the pew doors their names and the date at which they had taken their occupancy.[105] It was not long before such arrangements became 'customary'; what might seem like arbitrary intrusions to one generation became ingrained practice to that which succeeded it. This, too, could be part of the customary mentality. In the 1670s the parishioners of Ormskirk (Lancashire) were organized according to their social position. This was justified with reference to custom. As the yeoman Samuel Prescot explained, 'the meaner

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[103] Derbyshire RO, D258M/28/13b. For one such seating arrangement for the parish church of Ashford (Derbyshire) from 1632, in which the richer villagers were placed closer to the pulpit, see Derbyshire RO, D307, Box H.

[104] R. Clark, 'Anglicanism, recusancy and dissent in Derbyshire, 1603-1730', DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1979, 10.

[105] See N. Pevsner, <u>The buildings of England: Derbyshire</u> (London, 1953), 78.

sort comonly [should give] …place to those of better qualitye, and this has been the custome there ev[e]r since this depo[nen]t can rememb[er]'.[106]

Conflicts between gentry families over the location of their pews were watched with keen interest by their poorer neighbours. From their depositions, we can reconstruct something of the memories and stories that circulated amongst labouring people concerning elite space within the parish church. Many lower-class deponents appear to have accepted that key areas of their parish churches fell under the control of powerful local families. Thus, in 1701, the 67 year-old husbandman John Barker remembered that his father had told him that the chancel of his parish church of Weaverham (Cheshire) belonged to the Dutton family and so was known as 'Dutton chancel'. Memories of personal proximity to gentry families were clearly valued by some labouring people and were passed down the generations. In the same dispute, the 79 year-old husbandman Richard Taylor recalled how, when he was 'a youth of fifteen or sixteen' his grandmother had told him that when she was a servant to the Duttons of Dutton Hall, she used to sit with them during divine service and that their pew had, indeed, been located in the chancel.[107]

Varying in their exact features from one place to another, certain areas of the parish church appear to have been conceived of as gentry space. In 1681, the parishioners of Church Hulme (Cheshire) were divided as to whether the Cotton family of Cotton Hall or their local opponents the Nedhams owned the chancel of their parish church. It was accepted that both families were very ancient; the 86 year-old yeoman John Tomlinson, cited the 'common report' that the Nedhams 'very anciently and for many generacons were the L[or]ds and Owners of the ancient Mansion house … called Cranage Hall'. Other witnesses said the same

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[106] Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1678-9) 9. See also Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1672) 29.
[107] Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1701) 7.

about the Cottons' tenure of Cotton Hall. The bulk of the evidence seemed to favour the Nedhams. There was an allegation, for instance, that the Cottons had recently removed the Nedham arms from the chancel. The blacksmith John Lane stated that he had 'heard both his father and Grandfath[e]r say that one of the ancestors of the family of the Nedhams did build the church … and the Chancell and steeple thereof and gave the bells there.' The 'common report' was cited to the same effect. Then there was the 'ancient monum[en]t … said to be Judge Nedhams', the brass inscription of which demonstrated that it had been erected nearly 200 years ago. Whatever side one took in the dispute, it was clear that either one gentry family or another – certainly not the parishioners as a whole – owned the chancel; and that they had done so for centuries.[108]

The physical features of the churches in the villages and towns which gentry families sought to dominate represented emblems of their claims to lineage, honour and – ultimately – to authority. When in 1602 the Somerset gentleman Thomas Francis removed a stained glass window depicting the ancestors of his local opponents, the Ley family, and replaced it with his own coat of arms, the vicar interpreted this as 'an intente to extinguishe the memorye of the … Auncestors' of the Leys. Perhaps Francis felt empowered to take this action because, in the century since the stained glass window was raised, the fortunes of the Ley family had declined, and by 1614 some were classed as yeomen and others even as weavers.[109] By way of contrast, upon the Restoration, the Royalist family the Cholmondleys took an evident delight in replacing their heraldic arms in the chancel of Lower Peover church (Cheshire), the originals had been destroyed by Parliamentarian soldiers during the civil wars. The Cholmondleys had long claimed ownship of the chancel of the church; in erecting their arms

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[108] Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1681) 2.
[109] TNA, STAC8/196/20.

anew, they demonstrated the reestablishment of their authority, visibly apparent in a key memory site within the village.[110]

Within communities, stories passed to and fro concerning the history of their parish churches. In Leigh (Lancashire) in 1664, a series of witnesses referred to the 'Comon voice and fame' of the parish concerning the ownership of the chancel, which was a source of dispute between two gentry families: the Athertons of Atherton Hall and the Bradshawes. The diversity of oral tradition was evident: the 81 year-old tailor James Howell acknowledged that on this topic 'some of the neighbors are of one opinion and some of another'. His neighbour Henry Smith cited the tradition that the manor had been given to the Athertons by some unspecified monarch, and that the Athertons had at that time been granted their heraldic arms. Roger Rigby also called attention to the Athertons' arms, recalling how they had been painted on the wall of the chancel 40 years earlier. Heraldry, then, was not only legible to members of the gentry; their poorer neighbours also paid close attention to such things, as they helped to constitute the mnemonics of the parish church.

The social memory that informed popular readings of their parish churches could reach far into the distant past. In the same case, Ellen Brabin remembered how her father, George Starkey, had argued with the Bradshawes over his occupancy of a certain pew where, he claimed, his family had always sat; at that time, Starkey had exclaimed that 'he thought it was a hard case that he should aske leave to sitt & bury there where he & his predecessors had sitt & buryed noe many yeares without leave as they had done'. Starkey had gone in search of the 'auncient people' of the parish, and had asked them about the history of the pew. He was told that 'at flodden feild some of his Ancest[or]s who lived at Pinington Hall had furnished the

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[110] Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1686)1. For other memories of the depradations of parliamentary troops, see BL, Lansdowne Ms 897, fol. 71r.

then L[or]d of Atherton with eight or tenn men & horses against that battall and for that consideracion [the lord] had leave given him to sitt & bury there'.[111] Not for the first time, Lancashire folk – whose ancestors had played a decisive role in the engegagement - gave the memory of Flodden Field an enduring local meaning.[112]

Elderly people often had sharp memories of events that had taken place in their parish churches. In 1612, the 80-year old Anna Rishton recalled the funeral of her mother, Lady Standley, and how 'this dep[onen]t beinge her doughter came to Blackbourne church wth her corpes & being in greef and heaviness was carried oute of the church when her corpes were putt into the Earth butt did both see her greave and hearse stand in the Chappell in question'. Other Blackburn (Lancashire) parishioners retained similarly sharp memories of the local gentry's use of the church. One old man remembered how when Sir Thomas Talbot died, his body had lain in the chapel 'and saith his Insignes vizt his velvett sword and Coate armor hounge over the saide…. Hearse'. A number of witnesses recalled how, around 1550, the same Sir Thomas Talbot had returned from the Scottish wars and

> uppon a Sondaie or hullidaie came to Blackbourne church and broughte wth him a greate companie of his souldiers wth syde coats some in blewe, some in white wth red crosses on the backe and breste and saith upon the said S[r] Thomas his comeinge in to the saide Chappell there sate some people there amongste whome…was one of the Talbotts Lords of Sailsburie…all the wch people that were in the said Chapell the said S[r] Thomas upon his comeinge discharged sayeinge there was noe … [room] there butt for himselfe and his souldiers & whereupon all the people went awaie'

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[111] Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1664) 69.
[112] For other Lancashire memories of the Battle of Flodden, see Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1664) 69; TNA, DL44/196. For a Gloucestershire memory of Flodden, see TNA, E134/7Eliz/East1. For a Yorkshire memory of Flodden, see TNA, E134/17Eliz/East6.

As the parishioners left, Talbot knelt before the altar, still in his armour, and there gave prayers for the safe return of his company.[113]

The parish church therefore formed a theatre for the display of the local social hierarchy.[114] Who sat where, and whose ancestors had been buried where, had important implications for one's standing. Thus, as one deponent bluntly put it in the dispute over Blackburn church, **'Sr Thomas Talbott and great men may sitt where they please'**.[115] Seating arrangements could be a means by which a poorer individual's social inferiority might be reinforced within the charged environment of the parish church. All of this was hard-wired into local memory. The 76-year old Edward Worthington recalled how he had sometimes sat in a pew in Macclesfield church (Cheshire) that was claimed by one of the wealthy families of the town. He remembered how he had once been asked by one of the women of that family to remove himself and 'she being a p[er]son of quallitye in the towne, and this depo[nen]t but an inferior p[er]son and an undertenant' did so without further ado. His neighbour, George Day, read the physical embellishments of the pew in question in terms of an embedded social hierarchy, observing that heraldic arms were carved into it 'as if it had been for distinction and as belonging to a better person or family than the rest'.[116]

The seating arrangements of parish churches were meant to define a rigid social order, one that was embedded in collective memory and custom. Yet early modern society was constantly changing, pulled to and fro by sometimes violent structural change. Seating arrangements, presenting themselves as frozen by custom and long usage, had to reflect this

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[113] Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1612) 28.
[114] And also for its deliberate subversion. For examples, see TNA, STAC8/29/8; S. Hindle, 'Custom, festival and protest in early modern England: the Little Budworth Wakes of St. Peter's Day, 1596', <u>RH</u>, 6, 2 (1995), 155-78.
[115] Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1612) 28.
[116] Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1675) 1.

social reality. The result was episodic conflict amongst wealthier families as to their place within the seating arrangements. As we have seen, poorer people observed such disputes with considerable interest, retelling the stories of earlier conflicts within the church so that they became part of the collective memory of the plebeian community. Changes to seating arrangements might be criticized in the same terms as encroachments upon the commons – as having 'enclosed and severed' social space.[117] Thus, in 1672 the parishioners of Ormskirk (Lancashire) condemned the attempt by the local esquire George Hurleston to turn 'one of those comon open seats in the body of our church into an Inclosure or Pew with an intent to appropriate it wholly to his owne use and to exclude others from it.'[118] A common space, its use regulated by custom and embedded within collective memory, was being taken into the hands of the wealthy. The same slippage between the interior space of the parish church and the exterior world of commons and enclosures was to be found in Burnley church (Lancashire) in 1634: whereas the principal inhabitants had their particular places noted in the plan of the pews, the anonymous cottagers were accorded pews 'to be used in common'.[119] All of these memories tell us much about the profound association between parochial and communal identification. They lead us, thereby, to the ways in which vernacular landscapes could provide richly local ways of remembering.

III

Vernacular landscapes, popular memories

In 1733, Richard Parrott wrote an account of the layout of his home village of Audley (Staffordshire).[120] As his mind's eye ran past the houses and fields of his parish, Parrott noted the sequence of memories they evoked: almost every house had a tale to tell. Sometimes, an

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[117] Hindle, State and social change, 81.
[118] Cheshire RO, EDC5 (1672) 29.
[119] W. Bennett, The history of Burnley, 1400 to 1650 (Burnley, 1947), 128.
[120] S.A.H. Burne (ed.), 'Parrott's Audley Survey, 1733', in Collections for a history of Staffordshire, Staffordshire Record Society, 1944 (Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1947), xv-xxiv, 1-74.

earlier occupant was remembered as a 'drinking man'; elsewhere, occupational casualties were recalled, many of them connected to the coal mining industry. Then there were those who had, in Parrott's opinion, suffered from mental illness, catholic recusancy or anabaptistry. Whether their lack of fortune was accidental, occupational, addictive, doctrinal or psychiatric, all found their place in Parrott's construction of the local historical landscape. Richard Parrott's social status placed him in the wide, hazy hinterland that separated the yeoman from the village gentleman: had they been asked, his neighbours might have said that he was one of the middle sort of people. However he might have been placed in the local hierarchy, Parrott was certainly an insider. Like John Smyth of Nibley and Anthony Bradshawe of Duffiled, he was culturally amphibious. Parrott's family had lived in the village for generations and he knew the place intimately, calling on that knowledge when mapping, house by house, his 1733 survey. He was comfortable in tapping into local memory: many of his anecdotes, potted biographies or rough genealogies reached back by 150 years, and some by 170 or 180 years. When a family moved away from the village, in most cases Parrott lost interest in them. His account was ordered around <u>houses</u> rather than <u>households</u>; what really mattered to him were the stories that attached to particular sites.[121]

Parrott's primary frame of reference was spatial. He had a clear sense of chronological time, but it was one that was ordered within a local landscape. Parrott presents his reader with an unfolding sequence of material memories, based on collective recollection. These are given meaning by his careful attention to the <u>tenurial</u> characteristics of houses and fields – looking at the land and at the that stood upon structures upon it, he confidently segmented the land into leasehold, copyhold or freehold. Richard Parrott's world-view was that of what historians of kinship and migration call the 'core dynastic family': families that stay in the

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[121] For a similar sense of place, see BL, Add MS 38599, fol. 70r.

same community for generation after generation and who help to define and maintain local culture. Telling us a lot more about other such core dynastic families than those who moved on, Parrott presents us with a world in which property, land and houses descended seamlessly through time, each generation working the land upon which their forefathers and mothers had laboured. Thus, addressing the longevity of his own family's tenure in the village, and the security of their estate, he cites the testimony of Robert Whytall who provided evidence of his family's tenure 'a little before his death, who was tenant above 60 years to Cawleys land, and his father who was tenant to the said lands near 60 years before and him he said tould him the same. This Robert dyed 48 years since'. Dating Parrott's note to 1733 means that Whythall died in 1685; that he became a tenant in 1625; and hence that his father took up his tenancy in 1565. This sequence of memories allowed Parrott to reach back in the history of his village by perhaps 168 years.[122]

Although Richard Parrott's focus is largely upon the landholding families of the village, occasionally we get glimpses of the very poor, some of whom had roots in the village that were just as deep as their wealthier neighbours. He notes, for instance, 'a very old cottage longe inhabited by the Deans. I have known 5 generations of them goe a-beging'.[123] In Audley, local memory was illuminated by flashes of detail: treading his mental map, Parrott reached the houses inhabited by the Abnet family, of whom he noted that 'They were said to be Abnets before William the Conqueror came into England, and that one of them carried collers at Bloorheath Battel'.[124] This battle had been fought in 1459 only a few miles away from Audley. Its memory was at once both national and local in its significance. And this was, in 1733, still very much a local world: Parrott noted the families who had crossed into nearby Cheshire or Derbyshire. In a couple of cases, he tells us that Audley men met sticky

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[122] Burne (ed.), 'Parrott's Audley survey', 45.
[123] ibid., 46.
[124] ibid., 53.

ends in William III's wars in Flanders and Ireland. The most exotic property holder was Dr Stringer, who lived in Newcastle-under-Lyme and had been born in Leiden. With the exception of Dr Stringer, we are in the world of the local, the plebeian and the vernacular.

We will here deal with some of the same issues that concerned Richard Parrott when he wrote his local historical geography. This section will look at the ways in which ordinary people read, named and mapped the land about them and with the means by which they located and sustained their memories within the landscape. The focus is therefore upon the <u>agency</u> which ordinary people brought to the land and the <u>creativity</u> with which they ordered and understood their world. The previous section was largely concerned with sacred spaces: inside the parish church, and the parish boundaries. But these were not the only boundaries that worked upon the early modern landscape. In many communities manorial boundaries remained significant; and the boundaries of boroughs were of central importance to urban custom. There are, then, good reasons to challenge Steve Hindle's proposition that 'The parish was <u>the</u> locale in which community was constructed and reproduced, perhaps even consecrated … The parish was <u>the</u> arena in which structure, ritual and agency combined to create and maintain (and perhaps even to challenge) a highly localised sense of belonging'.[125] As we shall see, manorial boundaries defined the operation of key aspects of customary law and structured the sense of landscape within which social memory was constructed.

Despite the centrality of such senses to plebeian contemporaries, historians of early modern England have not been good at thinking about these issues, continuing to deal with human activity as though it took place outside any specific physical environment.[126] Until very

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[125] S. Hindle, 'A sense of place? Becoming and belonging in the rural parish, 1550-1650', in A. Shepard and P. Withington (eds), <u>Communities in early modern England</u> (Manchester, 2000), 96.
[126] For interpretations of space in early modern social history, see Gowing, '"Freedom of the streets"; Flather, <u>Gender and space</u>; D.A. Postles, <u>Social geographies in England (1200-1640)</u> (Washington, DC, 2007); F.

recently, the notable exception to this lack of interest was David Rollison's work on early modern Gloucestershire. Rollison argued that for early modern people, 'The local landscape served as a memory palace' which 'was literally used to store information'[127] More recently, work by Alexandra Walsham on religious landscapes and Nicola Whyte's study of landscape and memory in early modern Norfolk have further developed the field.[128] None the less, it is to archaeology and social anthropology that we must turn for the richest research and deepest insights into the relationship between environment, landscape, memory and identity.[129]

In this section, I argue that landscape was always much more than a merely passive backdrop to human affairs. As Barbara Bender puts it, 'the landscape is never inert, people engage with it, re-work it, appropriate and contest it'.[130] Memory flowed through the landscape, giving meaning to the environment at the same time as the material world structured collective remembrance. For early modern people, landscape, place and memory created an overlapping patchwork of little worlds. Thus, 'Places [were] not just passive backdrops to social process but [were] actively involved in the constitution and construction of social identities'.[131] Early modern landscapes were rich in commemorative associations and repetitive practices: in 1638, for instance, the old men of Sutton (Sussex), remembered how an oak tree known as the Mark Oak had always been incised with a mark by the tenants of Sutton and Bury during

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Williamson, 'Space and the city: gender identities in seventeenth-century Norwich', Cultural and Social History, 9, 2 (2012), 169-86.

[127] Rollison, Local origins, 4, 70.

[128] Walsham, Reformation of the landscape; Whyte, Inhabiting the landscape.

[129] R. Johnston, 'Approaches to the perception of landscape', Archaeological Dialogues, 5 (1998), 54-68; P.J. Ucko and R. Layton (eds.), The archaeology and anthropology of landscape: shaping your landscape (Londonon, 1999); W. Ashmore, 'Social archaeologies of landscape' in L. Meskell and R.W. Preucel (eds.), A companion to social archaeology (Oxford, 2004), 255-71; P.J. Stewart and A. Strathern (eds.), Landscape, memory and history: anthropological perspectives (London, 2003); B. Bender (ed.), Landscape: politics and perspectices (London, 1993); Thomas, 'Archaeologies of place and landscape', 170-81. See also Halbwachs' comments: The collective memory, 138, 140.

[130] B. Bender, 'Introduction: landscape – meaning and action', in Bender (ed.), Landscape, 3.

[131] M. Savage, 'Space, networks and class formation', in N. Kirk (ed.), Social class and Marxism: defences and challenges (Aldershot, 1996), 69.

their perambulations. One aged man recalled how his father often mentioned this to him.[132] The landscape therefore formed a text which local inhabitants were able to read, imbued with memories, stories and associations that were invisible to outsiders. Operating upon it was a living system of customary regulation: ordering the movement of animals upon trackways and commons, of osscilating ownership on local property markets, of access to resources allowed or denied to the poor. Boundary markers were a key part of this spatial system, and care was taken to ensure that they were maintained in their proper place. Similarly in 1655, the manor court of Compton Chamberlayne (Wiltshire), ordered that three named tenants should view the boundaries and where any stone had been moved, which should be returned to 'the ancient place where it stood before'.[133] Boundaries marked ownership, entitlement and access; symbolically, they demarcated individual and collective resources, rights, affinities and obligations. In this respect, property and community were written upon the land.

This sense of the landscape as a bearer of memories and a record of past historical communities is clear in a set of depositions recorded between 1586 and 1591 concerning the deserted village of Whatborough (Leicestershire).[134] The stories recorded in the depositions mixed local tradition and personal memory, combined with a close reading of the land and an acute sense of place. The 72 year-old husbandman Valentine Allen explained that in all his remembrance there had only ever been one house in Whatborough, but that

> he hathe hearde by his Auncestors that there was a hamlett or village there whereof some
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> signes or likelihoods appeare at this daye … [that is] that howses have there stoode and
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> that the saide close was in the priors occupacon or his tenaunts untill the suppression
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> thereof

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[132] Lord Leconfield, <u>Sutton and Duncton manors</u> (Oxford, 1956), 45-6.
[133] Bettey (ed.), <u>Wiltshire farming</u>, 190.
[134] The key sources are Bodl. Lib. DD All Souls, Box C220, no. 111; Bod. Lib. DD All Souls, Box C221, nos. 123 (b) and 231 (c); Bodl. Lib. DD All Saints, Box C223, no. 145; Bodl. Lib. DD All Souls, Box C228 no. 195.

This vanished village lay upon a hill within what by the 1580s had become known as Whatborough Great Close. As Allen observed, 'the greatest parte of the greate close called [W]hadborowe lyeth ridge and furrowe', adding that 'in a field called Spott meadowe fielde there is a place called the dam whiche by likelyhood hathe bene a dame for a mylne'.

Valentine Allen was acting as a kind of landscape archaeologist, interpreting patterns and formations upon the land alongside material remains, local tradition and place-name evidence. His neighbour, William Bringhurst, explained how the land had once been occupied by Laund priory, and that he had been 'bredde and brought up in the priory of Lawnde from the age of ten yeares for seven yeares and a halfe or thereabouts'. Other deponents remembered that the Prior and monks used to take in Whatborough when on their Rogationtide procession - what William Rivett remembered as 'the weeke commonlie of ould called Crose weeke'. One forty-year old shepherd could confirm none of this from his memory, but he knew the evidence of his eyes, observing that 'in manie places the hedge and ditche wch incloseth whadborowe close towards shalsteed standeth on ridge and furrowe … p[ar]te of the furlonge lye within the hedge of whadborow close and p[ar]te without'. His point, then, was that since the ridge and furrow lay at an angle to the hedge, that arable farming – and hence human cultivation - predated the destruction of the village.

In calling attention to the mute testimony of the ridge and furrow, the probable location of an old mill and the remains of the depopulated village, coupled with their recollections of the pre-Dissolution days of Laund priory, the Elizabethan witnesses told a story of steady change punctuated by a moment of sudden alteration. One deponent, the 90-year old labourer Robert Watts, recalled that almost all of these events had unfolded within his lifetime. For the late Elizabethan witnesses, this story was rendered legible through the readership of material

remains, place-name evidence and collective memories. When they turned their ears to listen, then, the land told tales to early modern labouring people. The Whatborough inhabitants' sense of the past was 'encoded in physical space', not least because 'geography does more than carry important historical referents: it also organizes the manner in which these facts are conceptualized, remembered and organized into a temporal framework'.[135]

Local boundaries were often laid out by stones – 'meerstones' – that had been erected by earlier generations. Some meerstones were marked by crosses; one reference from 1738 speaks of how such crosses were carved again in the face of their erosion.[136] Others were denoted by carvings of the arms of the lord of the manor.[137] Trees, too, were integrated into mental boundaries; in many cases, they were indicated by crosses that had been cut into their trunks.[138] Alternatively, parish processioners sometimes cut crosses in the earth at key points.[139] Those who went the bounds of the manor of Elizabethan Rawcliffe Moor (Yorkshire) re-ploughed the ditches which marked their boundaries.[140] Rather grim memories were sometimes located at the bounds: the limits of Hermitage (Dorset) in 1607 included a 'pitt on the right hand in which pytt as we are crediblie informed there hath been buried a boy which hanged himself in that pitt'.[141] The importance of such landmarks in perambulations reveals something of popular conceptions of space: as Nicola Whyte has suggested, 'In contrast to our modern conceptualizations of boundaries as linear features … boundaries in

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[135] J. Rappaport, The politics of memory: native historical interpretation in the Colombian Andes (Cambridge, 1990), 11.

[136] BL, Add MS 33061, fols. 133r, 136r.

[137] Lawson-Tancred, Records, 101.

[138] GA, D199/1. One perambulation makes it clear that, as inhabitants passed marked trees, they renewed those marks: Storey Maskelyne, 'Perambulation of Purton', 123-8. The best introduction to the topic is Winchester, Discovering parish boundaries.

[139] Nottingham University Library, Pw1/399.

[140] York City Archives Department, M31/460. For more on Rawcliffe Moor at this time, see TNA, DL4/24/9.

[141] Barker and Seaward, 'Boundaries and landscape in Blackmoor', 18.

the early modern period were probably thought of as nodal points in the landscape'.[142] Those

boundaries could be almost painfully precise. That between Astley and Bedford (Lancashire)

was shown in 1623 to run right through the house occupied by Adam and George Hindley.

The significance of this was that it allowed the lessee of the tithes of Astley to demand

payment for a tithe goose that had been born on that side of the house that lay within that

parish.[143] Knowledge of manorial and parochial bounds often endured in the face of material

changes that threatened otherwise to obscure key boundary markers. A similarly intense

specificity manifested itself in Sutton (Sussex) in 1638, in which one inhabitant was able to

recount the houses in his village that included in their structures wooden beams from trees

that had once grown upon the common.[144] The pains to which local inhabitants went to

preserve their boundary markers is testimony to the importance of those sites: in 1583, the

manorial jurors of Morston (Norfolk) recorded that as the processioners approached Blakeney

haven, they reached a spot 'wch place was sometime fixed a great stone called the hortstone

wch stone ys not well to be seene being as we thinck covered wth sand by the overflowing of

the sea'.[145] The stone having vanished in the ever-shifting mudflats around Blakeney, the

Morston juors took care to note its location in their collective memory.

Such boundary markers were felt deeply in the countryside; but they also made sense in the

urban environment. Inhabitants of the parish of St. Mark's, which lay just outside the walls of

Canterbury, explained in 1667 how an ash tree 'with the marke used by the said parishe upon

it' stood at a key turning point in the parochial bounds. Inevitably, such markers had a finite

life. But even where important trees had died, a remembrance of their existence remained

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[142] Whyte, 'Landscape, memory and custom', 175.
[143] A. Crosby, 'Fowl play? Keeping and stealing geese in Lancashire, 1550-1850', in A. Crosby (ed.), Lancashire local studies in honour of Diana Winterbotham (Preston, 1993), 52. For a similar example, see G.D.J., 'The Burwash-Etchingham parish boundary', Sussex Notes and Queries, 13, 11-12 (1952), 229-234.
[144] Lord Leconfield, Sutton and Duncton manors (Oxford, 1956), 45-6.
[145] NRO, RAY34.

imprinted upon collective memory: the inhabitants of St. Mark's went on to identify 'a stone where an oak tree once stood' and 'a heap of stones where a maple tree once stood with the parish mark on it'.[146] Likewise, at the boundary of eighteenth-century Brigstock (Northamptonshire) stood 'a stone three foot high with this inscription HERE IN THIS PLAES STOOD BOCASWE TREE'.[147] Elsewhere, vanished boundary markers were noted in parochial documentation: in his account of the founds of his parish of Amwell (Hertfordshire) in 1634, the clergyman Thomas Hassall noted Pinching Field, where there had stood two 'fair and antient oken pollards which had been marked with many crosses for remembrances but are now stocked up and gone'.[148] Alternatively, turning points in manorial or parochial bounds might lie at the corner of a particular field, a lane or a highway.

Boundaries were living things. Parishioners not only mentally marked the bounds during Rogationtide processions; they grafted that memory onto the physical environment, freshening crosses cut into trees, re-carving parish marks onto stones and crosses. In some parishes, mounds of stones provided indications of parochial boundaries, built up year on year as generations of inhabitants brought stones to be deposited upon the pile in the course of their Rogationtide processions, building up the mounds as physical markers of their collective memory. In 1595, the 65 year-old husbandman Robert Swan of Burnham Thorpe (Norfolk) described how his neighbours and those of the adjacent settlements of Burnham Overy and Holkham marked out the bounds:

> the inhabitants of Burnham Thorpe yearelie at soche tyme as they go their p[er]ambulacon laie a heape of stones at the upper ende of that waie by Holkhams bordere as a marke to p[ar]te and devide the bounds of their towne from the bounds of

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[146] TNA, E134/19ChasII/Mich24. For detailed accounts of Canterbury's boundaries, see BL, Add Ms 32311, fols.. 205v, 207v-9v, 251v-70v.

[147] J. Bridges, The history and antiquities of Northamptonshire, 2 vols (Oxford, 1971), II, 285. For other examples, see Smith, 'Two perambulations', 22; JRL, Nicholas Ms 65, fol. 5v.

[148] Doree (ed.), Parish register, 240.

Burnham Overy and he thinketh that the inh[ab]itants of Burnham Overy laye also a heape of stones on the other side of that waie against the said heapes laid by Burnham Thorpe.[149]

Many meerstones had their own names. In 1683, the boundary markers of Cumwhinting (Cumberland) included a standing stone called 'Heard-How-Stone'.[150] One hundred and twenty three years earlier, the bounds of the manor of Plumpton (Cumberland) began at 'one Great Grey Stone' called the 'Pucked Stone'.[151] The boundaries of Leathley moor in the North Riding in 1575 were said to include a number of marked stones, one of which was known as 'Sandwchstone'.[152] In the mid-seventeenth century, the jurisdiction of the manor of Wells (Somerset) was defined by, amongst other features, 'a stone called long-man'.[153] The perambulation of sixteenth-century Puddletown (Dorset) began at 'a certain stone by a cross called Nethway' and included 'a certain Tree called the Wythy' and 'a certain stone called headless Williames'.[154] Such markers comprised what Mikhail Bakhtin called 'chronotypes' – 'points in the geography of a community where time and space interest and fuse … chronotypes … stand as monuments to the community itself, as symbols of it, as forces operating to shape its members' images of themselves'.[155] Perambulations and the placing of markers and meerstones might therefore be seen as the maintaining 'accumulative landscapes', in which landscapes are 'composed of the traces of human action and natural features that form the focus of retrospective memories'.[156]

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[149] TNA, E134/37Eliz/East17. But see also TNA, E134/10Chas1/Mich51.
[150] CRO, DAY3/2.
[151] CRO, D/Hud/1/36.
[152] TNA, DL4/17/39.
[153] SRO, DD/CC/A/12357.
[154] WSA, 873/84.
[155] M.M. Bakhtin, The dialogic imagination: four essays (Austin: Texas, 1981), 7, 84-258.
[156] C. Holtorf and H. Williams, 'Landscapes and memories', in D. Hicks and M.C. Beaudry (eds.), The Cambridge companion to historical archaeology (Cambridge, 2006), 236-8.

Naming the landscape was central to the maintenance of long-established boundaries and to the rights they defined. When, in 1568, they produced an account of the bounds of Gillingham Forest (Dorset), the twelve Regarders of the Forest revealed a particular concern with the changing names of particular locations and landscape features. The Regarders noted that they had 'added hereby…some other names of bounds now knowne because that divers of the ancient names of the same perambulacon bee growne out of knowledge by reason of there antiquitie'. Thus, Lodborne bridge was 'of ould tyme…called Pomweyford'; Powridge bridge 'of ould tyme…was called the bridge of Mereford'; Whitehill had once been called The Leigh; gong pool had once been Hore Appledore; and so on. The 'Regarders' also observed some significant changes: a field called Horsington, for instance, just across the boundary in Wiltshire, 'was of ould tyme a wood wch wood is now wasted and distroyed'.[157] This 'will to remember' represented a deliberate and conscious attempt to inscribe collective memory within space.[158]

The names that attached to the land could encode historical information that rendered meaningful a sense of place. In 1586, the 85-year old yeoman John Rynder remembered that Middleham chapel (Yorkshire) had, prior to the Dissolution, housed a hermit who had been maintained by profits from a piece of land that was still called 'hirmitt croft and hirmitt rigg'.[159] Knowledge about standing structures added to this deeply-felt sense of the local past. In the 1590s, local inhabitants believed that an unfinished medieval mansion house at Melbourne (Derbyshire) had been started under John of Gaunt, but had been left uncompleted due to an insurrection.[160] In contrast, the origins of some buildings could be quite clear: returning to Middleham chapel, we find that it was known to have been constructed by Sir

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[157] JRL, Nicholas Ms 65, fols. 5v-6r.
[158] Nora, 'Between memory and history', 19.
[159] TNA, E134/28Eliz/East3.
[160] BL, Harl Ms 6592, fol. 73r.

Randall Pigott, as one deponent explained, because upon its walls there 'ys graven the piggotts armes wch yet remanethe ther and is therfor induced to thinke the same to be true for that he haith hard div[er]se Rede those words ingraven rownd about the said stone viz yf ye require or ye desire to mete who built this place Sir Randall Pigott'.[161] Early modern people therefore 'wrote history into the landscape' - an act which has been called '"topographic writing", a communicational system based on "topograms" (individual elements of the landscape).'[162]

Readings of the land were sometimes so precise as to draw upon particular trees, hedges and stones. Thus, in order to establish the ancient character of a given boundary, deponents might draw attention to features such as 'an Auncient quickesett hedge wherein are growinge great trees'.[163] Some trees enjoyed a special significance as the charged emblems of a spiritualized landscape: in 1666, one Derbyshire witness recalled how 'for all time of [his] memory' a thorn tree 'called Gospell Greane' had stood in the middle of Farirfield pasture and 'that he hath knowne about fifty yeares' when 'the Minyster & divers of the inhabitants of Fayrfield have gone in procession from Fayrefeild chappell through Fayrefeild pasture al[ia]s Greenefayrefeild unto the said Gospell Greane … there usually a Gospell was read'.[164] For many early modern people such landscape features were often filled with powerful memories; they took care to note the times at which a particular twist or turn in the boundaries had been delineated. In 1620, in the course of a dispute over the boundaries of the fields of Neats Close and Home Close in Geldeston (Norfolk), the 75-year old husbandman Thomas Strowger was able to verify the antiquity of the boundary on the basis that

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[161] TNA, E134/28Eliz/East3.

[162] Pei-yi Guo, '"Island builders": landscape and historicity among the Langalanga, Solomon Islands', in P.J. Stewart and A. Strathern (eds.), Landscape, memory and history: anthropological perspectives (London, 2003), 200.

[163] TNA, DL4/55/7. For a similar example, see TNA, E134/23&24Eliz/Mich14.

[164] TNA, E134/18ChasII/Mich19.

there is a banck beinge an auncient mencion of a ditche and there stand auncient trees

by which itt appeareth unto this depon[en]t that the said peece of ground …was of

auncient tyme sev[er]d from neats close & was noe pte thereof But taketh [that] … it

was in aunceint tyme p[ar]te of the close called home close.[165]

So finely tuned were such senses of place that some people were even able to recall the life-

course of individual trees. Thus, in 1585, William Spenser of Enfield (Middlesex) explained

that 'there are great trees growing in the old hedge of the … ground in question but of which

age … the same are … he cannot tell for four of them were old trees when [he] … was but a

boye'.[166] This 'place-bound sense of <u>being</u>' was built upon finely graded senses of place:

reading, monitoring and remembering change in the local world down to its most precise

details.[167]

Boundary markers were – within the customary mentality – meant to define the fixed, ancient

structures through which immemorial custom flowed, running into the deep, still waters of

collective memory. Manorial courts went to considerable efforts to ensure that those markers

that defined the limits of their jurisdictions went unchanged (and hence unchallenged).

Bylaws passed in 1641 for the manor of Cumwhinting (Cumberland) laid down a pain that

'None shall remove or deface Any Bounde Stakes, Markes or Meer Stones between

Neighbourhoods or Comons or between the said Manor & another'.[168] Orders for the keeping

of the Court Baron of Manchester specified that 'If any man hath removed bounds or marks,

meare stones or stakes', then they should be presented to the court 'for it is an evil office and

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[165] TNA, E134/17Jas1/Mich18.
[166] TNA, DL4/27/86.
[167] J.C. Barrett, <u>Fragments from antiquity: an archaeology of social life in Britain, 2900-1200 BC</u> (Oxford, 1994), 147; J. Thomas, 'The politics of vision and the archaeologies of landscape' in Bender (ed.), <u>Landscape,</u> 28.
[168] CRO, DAY3/2.

they deserve to be punished for it'.[169] In order to endure, then, the ancient bounds required constant maintenance and remembrance. In 1607, the inhabitants of Hermitage (Dorset) noted a number of spots where key boundary markers had once stood – a place 'wheretofore Late did grow a great Ash'; a spot 'where sometime stood a gate'; 'a place where sometimes was a Cross called Stoys Cross'; 'a place where Sometimes was a Cross called Cox Cross' – and went on to denote these sites with boundary stones.[170] Similarly, the Georgian inhabitants of Terling (Essex) made precise notes of recent alterations to boundary markers – the removal of a tree here, the erection of a fence there – and placed markers at those points.[171] Where boundaries changed, local inhabitants would only accept this if it resulted in their clearer specification, not least because it was crucial to the operation of customary law that the limits of the parish or manor remain stable: as Christopher Tilley puts it, 'A sense of attachment to place is frequently derived from the stability of meanings associated with it'.[172]

Yet, boundaries – and the landscapes they inscribed - were more fluid than this ideal suggests. In the face of fen drainage, forest clearance, mining operations, boundary disputes or the collapse of intercommoning arrangements, local inhabitants were forced to lay out new landmarks. Enclosure reified distinctions both between and within communities. Witnesses from the Derbyshire villages of Calver and Ashford recalled in 1618 how, over a period of 40 years, the boundaries between their settlements had become increasingly precise as enclosures multiplied across moorland which hitherto had been held in common.[173] Similarly, in 1670, arbitrators appointed to settle disputes between the tenants and lords of Bothel (Cumberland) ordered that 'the xij men ... shall sett mearestones Betwene the lands ...

[169] Eglington Bailey, 'Dr John Dee', 13.
[170] Barker and Seaward, 'Boundaries and landscape in Blackmoor', 17.
[171] Clark, 'Terling perambulations', 14-29.
[172] Tilley, Phenomenology of landscape, 18.
[173] TNA, C21/D1/13.

according to right'.[174] In September 1579, the manor court of Duncton (Sussex) ordered that all the copyholders were to join the officers in placing markers at the boundaries 'where they should be by custom'.[175] Similarly, in 1544, the boundary between Pewnwortham and Houghwick were laid out with great stones 'for a perpetual memory'.[176] The eighty year-old yeoman Hugh Greene remembered in 1607 how about 50 years earlier, officers of the Duchy of Lancaster had established 'contrary markes' between Chelmorton and Blackwall (Derbyshire) 'that they might be knowne a sunder'.[177] In 1637, a Dorest gentleman recalled how 29 years earlier he had been present when Hungerhill Farm and its commons had been delineated from the neighbouring settlement and that 'ancient' people had 'agreed and soe placed and sett downe accordingly to bee the uttermost and p[er]petuall boundes betweene the heathes and waste of the said mannor and farme'. At that time, 'there were holes made where the bounds should goe for the better Testimony thereof ever after'. The witnesses had then ordered that the holes should be 'digged and made bigger into barrowes for the better distinguishing of the said heathes wch shortely after ... was don[e] accordingly for that barrowes are nowe in the same places then agreed to bee soe made'. In order to make doubly sure that such boundaries were recorded for posterity, an account of the perambulation was written.[178]

For those who had eyes to see, then, the local world was imbued with dense, rich meaning. As Ruth Van Dyke and Susan Alcock put it

> past peoples knowingly inhabited landscapes that were palimpsests of previous
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> occupations. Sites were built on sites; landscapes were occupied and reoccupied time

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[174] CRO, D/LAW3/5/11.
[175] Leconfield, <u>Sutton and Duncton</u>, 70.
[176] H. Fishwick (ed.), <u>Pleadings and depositions in the Duchy Court of Lancaster in the time of Henry VIII</u>, Lancashire and Cheshire Record Society, 35 (Manchester, 1897), 203-4.
[177] TNA, STAC8/103/6.
[178] TNA, E134/11&12ChasI/Hil9. For a similar example, see TNA, DL4/14/20.

and again. Rarely was this a meaningless or innocent reuse. Like us, past peoples observed and interpreted traces of more distant pasts to serve the needs and interests of their present lives.[179]

Boundary markers, standing structures, lanes and field patterns represent examples of what archaeologists call 'antecedent structures': elements of the material world which originate in earlier epochs, which have endured over long periods of time and which continue to structure human behaviour and perceptions. Moreover, the meanings given at any moment to landscape features inherited from earlier epochs remain fluctuating and contingent; nonetheless, they remained embedded in a sense of the past which, as it was constantly reinvented, helped to shape the lived world.

Especially in neighbouring villages that intercommoned upon wide tracts of moors, forest or fen, boundaries could be very loose.[180] Elsewhere, local people could be sharply aware of the significance of manorial and parochial bounds. Thus, in 1578, aged inhabitants of Croyden (Surrey) recalled how, during their Rogationtide perambulation, because their own side of the boundary was full of brambles, they had transgressed the limits of the neighbouring settlement. When they reached the bramble patch, an old man recalled how they had been told by 'some of [the] company… nowe you muste remember that wee are owte of o[u]r owne bounds and goe here butt for our ease.'[181] This intense sensitivity to precise jurisdictions is to be found throughout England. In 1619, the Somerset yeoman Leonard Christover remembered when, about 55 years before, he had been a servant in the house of Sir Raffe Hopkins. At that time he had been friendly with David Williams, who had once

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[179] R.M. Van Dyke and S.E. Alcock, 'Archaeologies of memory: an introduction', in R.M. Van Dyke and S.E. Alcock (eds.), <u>Archaeologies of memory</u> (Oxford, 2003), 1. For a sustained discussion of this point, see Bradley, <u>Past in prehistoric societies</u>

[180] See for example R.C. Purton, '"A description of ye Clee, ye L'dships, Comoners and Strakers adjoynd, made about 1612, 10 Jac"', <u>Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society</u>, 2nd. Ser., 8 (1896), 195-98.

[181] TNA, E134/20Eliz/East 7.

been a servant to the local priory. Christover described how, around 1564, he had been walking with Williams to 'a gate called clappgate' between the old bounds of the former Priory and the neighbouring parish of Marston. Christover remembered that he had asked Williams 'to cutt him a fishing rod wch the said Williams accordinglie did in p[ar]te of the ground wch lieth betweene the…p[ar]ke & the ground called Froome waie'. While he cut the rod, Williams explained how they stood upon the bounds between the old Priory and Marston parish, recalling how 'one Sowe of the Priors haveing had younge piggs betweene the [boundary] in the Priors time the p[ar]son of Mars[t]on demanded a tything pigg from the said sowe wch was denied by the Prior who aunswered that the sowe had farrowed on his owne grounds & tht the p[ar]son had nothing to doe to take the tith'.[182]

Late childhood and adolescence was the most important time at which memories of the bounds were impressed. Edward Goodwin, who gave evidence in 1599, remembered how, as a boy, he had been looking to sheep upon a tract of contested land when he was driven from it by a local shepherd. Goodwin appealed to the man, saying that 'I am a stranger and know not the meeres' and was able to persuade the man to describe the bounds in return for 'a pecke of meale'.[183] Labour upon the land ingrained in people's minds the whereabouts of boundaries that might be invisible to the outside observer. Margaret Harrap remembered in 1746 how early in her life she had worked as a shepherdess on the moorland, and later on had been employed by her father and grandfather leading packhorses from Buxton (Derbyshire) to Whaley Bridge (Cheshire). It had been her great uncle who first showed her the boundaries, and throughout her life she had continued to observe them.[184] Fundamental to this sense of being was the deliberate imprinting of an often complex mental map upon the minds of the young, or the instruction of newcomers as to their whereabouts. In 1627, the 73-year old

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[182] TNA, E134/17JasI/Hil9.
[183] TNA, DL4/41/51.
[184] TNA, DL4/144/1746/1.

George Shalcross remembered how his grandfather had shown him the boundaries of the manor of High Peak as they walked over the moors that lay between Chapel-en-le-Frith and Ashbourne (Derbyshire). On that occasion, his grandfather had pointed out two tracts of land, 'Mill Marsh and the Brecke' telling him that these were part of the commons of High Peak 'and bade this depont being then a yonge man, to take notice thereof'.[185] In the course of a controversy over the closure of a lane lying between the manor of Marston and the dissolved priory of Witham (Somerset), the 72-year old yeoman Hugh Hooper told the Exchequer Court in 1619 that 'he well remembreth that being a child his grandfather shewed him awaie wthout Witham pke pale wch leadeth up to Gare Hill charging him & three other boyes p[re]sent wth him that they should remember the said waie'.[186]

A broad stretch of memory underlay the testimony of Robert Heaward, who was aged 83 when he gave evidence to the Duchy Court in 1696. He explained that he had known the boundaries of Thornsett and Mellor (on the upland border between Cheshire and Derbyshire) for all his life, adding that 'When ... [he] was a boy' a stone was set at a turning point of the boundaries. Robert added that

> he hath known these places to be the Antient meers dureing all his remembrance & further saith that one Thomas Heward who was a near neighbour to this depont & was near a hundred years old at his death & dyed about fifty years ago hath often told this depont tht the aforesd. places were the antient meers and landmarks dividing the comons betwict Thornset & Mellor & acquainted this depont therewith that he might take notice thereof when he was dead and gone[187]

A similar stretch of time informed the 80-year old Thomas Smith's account of the disputed bounds of Fernilee and Shalcross (Derbyshire) in 1739. He explained that in his 'youthfull

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[185] TNA, DL4/77/3
[186] TNA, E134/17JasI/Hil9.
[187] TNA, DL4/128/1696/7.

days' he had worked as a shepherd on the commons of both townships. In those days, Fernilee and Shalcross had intercommoned. Thomas had been told the whereabouts of the bounds by Ralph Bowdn aged 80 and John Hill 'who was then One hundred years of age'; Thomas added that both 'have been dead many years'.[188] For people like Robert Heaward and Thomas Smith, rights in the present were sealed by their long labours upon land that had once been worked by long-dead neighbours and ancestors.

A powerful element in the maintenance of the social memory of the landscape was that of repetition: the repetition of tasks, passages, rituals, year after year, generation after generation. Witnesses in court cases concerning local custom characteristically reconstructed their memories of those repetitions: of actions performed over and again, of memories passed forwards and backwards. Indeed, the memorialisation of repetition is central to custom.[189] In 1596, the 70-year old yeoman Henry Sheldon explained to the Duchy Court that he well knew the commons of Taddington (Derbyshire) because as a boy he had often dug stone there for his father's drystone walls. He was able to name other neighbours who had done the same and he went on to describe the boundaries 'as his Ancestors … his Grandefather and Father have told him'.[190] What Henry Sheldon was recalling was what archaeologists would call a 'taskscape': a landscape made pregnant with meaning through the repetitious, inter-generational performance of work and movement upon it.[191] Christopher Tilley describes this well: 'Daily passages through the landscape become biographic encounters for individuals, recalling traces of past activities and previous events and the reading of signs – a split log

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[188] TNA, DL4/143/1739/1.

[189] For more on this, see H. Lefebvre, Everyday life in the modern world (1968; Eng Trans., New Brunswick, N.J., 1971), 18.

[190] TNA, DL4/38/17. For later memories of labours on Taddington's commons, see TNA, DL4/124/1687/7.

[191] The key text is T. Ingold, 'The temporality of landscape', World Archaeology, 25, 2 (1993), 152-74. For recent employments of the concept in social history, see K. Navickas, 'Luddism, incendiarism and the defence of rural "task-scapes" in 1812', Northern History, 48, 1 (2011), 59-73; McDonagh, 'Subverting the ground', 191-206.

here, a marker stone there'.[192] Family, childhood and the home were central to such memories. Henry Sheldon's neighbour Thomas Newton remembered in 1596 how his mother used to walk a mile and a half across Taddington common to fetch water from a stream.[193] Charles Potter of Alderwasley explained in 1723 how, working as a lead miner in nearby Wirksworth (Derbyshire), like his father before him, he walked daily over the moor to his place of employment.[194]

The power of such testimony lay in its quotidian qualities: walking the moors, year after year, generation after generation, demonstrated entitlements to land and resources. Continuity was central to the maintenance of this taskscape: Cicelie Hurrye of Sidestrand (Norfolk), aged 90 in 1613, explained 'that beinge a younge girle kept Cattell' on Boyesewell Common 'and was not forbad nor interrupted by anie'.[195] Likewise, the 74-year old widow Alice Needham explained in 1696 that she knew the commons of Chelmorton (Derbyshire) very well, because when she was a girl she had tended her father's sheep there. On the basis of this experience, she was able to give a fulsome account of customary rights upon the commons.[196] Equally important were patterns of sociability, based upon kin, community and social place. The 86-year old widow Anne Chapell explained that she had been born in the village of Flagg (Derbyshire) but knew the wider area very well, 'she going soe frequently over the said comons & amongst the neighbors and inhabitants of these Towns and so bee much with the better sort of people there'.[197] Elizabeth Standly also knew the area around Taddington

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[192] Tilley, Phenomenology of landscape, 27.
[193] TNA, DL4/38/17.
[194] TNA, E134/10GeoI/Mich 11.
[195] C.M. Hoare, Records of a Norfolk village, being notes on the history of the parish of Sidestrand (Bedford, 1914), 97.
[196] TNA, DL4/128/1695/3.
[197] TNA, DL4/124/1686/13.

because of her occupation: she was a midwife and 'early & late' had occasion to ride through one village after another.[198]

We have here sketched some of the ways in which landscape created a spatial pattern within which collective memory and social relations could operate. It must be borne in mind that underlying the rough generalisations that have been made here, were major regional and local variations in both physical spaces and mental landscapes. In downland England, much land had, by 1500, already been enclosed. Millennia of relatively dense settlement ensured that early modern people occupied a humanized landscape of fields, hedges, ditches, roads, lanes, churches, dwellings, ruins and crosses. In the downland zone, precise boundaries demarcated individual holdings, commons, and manorial and parochial bounds. In contrast, along the Pennine chain, on the Welsh marches, in the West Country, in areas of fenland or forest, and in the northern border counties, wide intercommoned expanses often lay between localities. This was especially the case as regards those villages that intercommoned with their neighbours.[199] Population pressures and land hunger meant that, within upland England, boundaries between individual holdings and on the wide tracts of moorland between manors became increasingly closely specified.[200] Sometimes, this was done through negotiation between lords, manor courts or notable inhabitants; sometimes, it was achieved in the course of litigation. Where lord and tenant could settle disputes, such compromises were written upon the land: at some time in the 1580s, for instance, an agreement was reached at Easthope (Shropshire) and meerstones laid across the common. This represented, as an aged man remembered it in 1641, 'the amending and perfecting' of the bounds.[201] In some regions, therefore, boundaries could be as fluid as the customary laws that were written into them.

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[198] TNA, DL4/124/1687/7.
[199] Winchester, Harvest of the hills
[200] For an example, see P.R. Edwards, 'Disputes in the Weald moors in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries', Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society, 63 (1985), 1-9.
[201] SA, 2922/1/2/11.

Legal cases concerning manorial and parochial boundaries might often be fixed by a commission of outside gentleman, appointed by a Westminster court to impose a fixed boundary across contested land.[202] Sometimes, such interventions were welcomed, settling as they did what could be bitter struggles; elsewhere they were resented as an intrusion by elite outsiders into a landscape that had been created by the hands of working people over generations. In this respect, the land was not only a bearer of symbols – it was also a location of conflict. We explore this insight more fully in the next section.

IV

'Here we were born and here we will die':

Opposing landscapes, opposing memories

In much the same way that no landscape is static, neither is any social order. Each bears the mark of the other's transformations. Fundamental to high-medieval seigneurialism had been the interlocking of place and power. In most early modern villages that grip slackened; in some, it tightened. We have already seen how the interiors of some churches were rearranged according to changing social structures. Power fed into space in other ways too. In the eighteenth century, designed parks and gardens around great houses expressed ruling class aspirations to civility and authority.[203] The construction or elaboration of guildhalls has been seen as the physical projection into the urban landscape of the wealth and authority of civic elites.[204] After the Restoration, the spatial expression of class difference became still more forced: it was not only the gentry and nobility that were using architecture to spell out their

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[202] For some examples, see TNA, DL5/27, pp. 907-8; TNA, DL3/27/R5; TNA, DL3/16/T2; TNA, E134/40&41Eliz/Mich21; TNA, E134/5Chas1/Mich19.

[203] T. Williamson, Polite landscapes: gardens and society in eighteenth-century England (Stroud, 1995).

[204] M. Johnson, 'Meanings of polite architecture in sixteenth century England', Historical Archaeology, 26, 3 (1992), 45-56; M. Johnson, Housing culture: traditional architecture in an English landscape (London, 1994); R. Tittler, Architecture and power: the town hall and the English urban community, c. 1500-1640 (Oxford, 1992).

authority; in rural communities, wealthy yeomen farmers were reconstructing their houses with brick, leaded windows and tiled roofs; in urban centres, a newly assertive middling sort was developing a taste for the order and harmony that they felt radiated from classical architecture.[205]

From the end of the fifteenth century, we see new meanings and specifications attributed to manorial and parochial jurisdictions. In some communities, lords retreated to the cities, leaving the manorial system to ossify into a mere register of rents and land transactions. Elsewhere, lords extended their personal estates such that seigneurial control over resources also extended control over space.[206] Equally important was the formation as a result of the Elizabethan poor laws of the concept of a civil parish, within which poorer local inhabitants enjoyed the right to poor relief, but from which the indigent poor were barred. This process also involved the redefinition of space; parochial bounds became the limits of not only of the spiritual community, but after 1597 marked the limits of local responsibility for the poor.[207] Plotting boundaries between manors, lordships, boroughs and parishes therefore created a whole 'semiotic system' built upon collective memory and common experience.[208] Readings of the land drew upon an intermeshed jumble of conflicting jurisdictions, the origins and extent of which could only be explained by the oldest inhabitants of a locality. We see, then, a clear association between the organisation and use of space and the projection of a variety

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[205] P. Borsay, The English urban renaissance: culture and society in the provincial town, 1660-1770 (Oxford, 1989); C. Platt, The great rebuildings of Tudor and Stuart England: revolutions in architectural taste (London, 1994); For a study of the relationship between classicism and capitalism, see M. Leone, 'The Georgian order as the order of capitalism in Annapolis, Maryland', in M. Leone and P. Potter (eds.), The recovery of meaning in historical archaeology (Washington, 1988), 235-62.

[206] For a some representative examples: fishing rights, see TNA, E134/10ChasI/Trin14; rabbit warrens, see TNA, E134/10JasI/East 27 and TNA, E134/43&44Eliz/Mich7; imparkment, see WSRO, Cowdray 1306, fols. 29r-30v; woodland, see TNA, DL4/109/8.

[207] Whyte, 'Landscape, memory and custom'.

[208] J. Frow, 'Discourse and power', in M. Gane (ed.), Ideological representation and power in social relations (London, 1989), 200.

of forms of authority – lordly; parochial; urban; spiritual. The concern of this closing section is to explore the ways in which landscape could become a field of contestation.[209]

It has already been suggested that, in its seating arrangements, funerary monuments and lordly control of the chancel, the parish church could be a theatre for the display of the local social hierarchy. Equally, it could prove a site within which subaltern identities might be fostered and asserted. The seven Norfolk churches that bordered on an intercommoned pasture called The Smeeth carried associations with the legendary giant Tom Hickathrift. In some, Tom had left his heraldic mark; in others, he had struggled with the Devil; the wall of one church was marked by an indent from a football which Tom had kicked at it. Significantly, the Hickathrift tradition first developed as a way of explaining the seven parishes' mutual interest in The Smeeth: according to the tradition, Tom Hickathrift had wrested control of the common from an enclosing lord and given it to the people of the seven parishes. Folkloric tradition, then, helped to legitimate customary entitlements and to reproduce within a localized sense of shared interest and collective identity.[210]

The church at Epworth (Lincolnshire) functioned as a memory site within which were stored documents and artefacts that legitimated the inhabitants' claims to common rights on the nearby fenland. A fourteenth-century lord of the manor, John de Mowbray, had granted a charter which provided the basis for the villagers' common rights. This was kept in parish chest, set 'under a window, wherein was the portraicture of Mowbray set in ancient glass, holding in his hand a writing which was commonly reputed to be an emblem of the deed'.[211] As in Epworth, the parish church of Methwold (Norfolk) bore close folkloric associations

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[209] For an example from classical Sparta, see S.E. Alcock, <u>Archaeologies of the Greek past: landscape, monuments and memories</u> (Cambridge, 2002), 132-75.

[210] Wood, 'The pedlar of Swaffham', 169-80.

[211] Holmes, 'Drainers and fenmen', 192.

with the origins of the inhabitants' customary entitlements. The inhabitants believed that, before the manor of Methwold had passed to the Duchy of Lancaster, its prominent lord, William, Earl Warren, had granted them a charter confirming their rights. In the 1720s, the people of Methwold explained the origin of their rights to the antiquarian Francis Blomefield before leading him to the parish church where they showed him the broken remnants of a medieval church brass which they preserved in the parish chest. As Blomefield explained, 'The tradition here is, that this is in memory of one of the Earls Warren, lords of the town, from whom they had their privileges'.[212] The people of Methwold were keen to plot their memories of the beneficent Earl Warren in other standing structures within the manor: in 1596, aged witnesses noted 'a seate for a lardge mansion howse' which the old men explained they had heard at 'some tyme' had belonged to Earl Warren.[213]

Just like the ancient structures that stood upon it, the physical form of the land could help to sustain popular readings of the past that could be deployed in contests in the present. Traces of ridge and furrow could easily be interpreted as signs of prior cultivation of land that had, subsequently, been turned over to lords' rabbit warrens or deer parks, or had become part of a wealthy farmer's sheep run. Reading the land in this way could constitute an act of resistance. Thus, the 47-year old Norfolk shepherd Robert Kyd explained to commissioners of the court of Exchequer in 1583 that he had been born in South Wootton and had lived there for all his life. He alluded in his evidence to a conflict that simmered between South Wootton and the lord of the adjoining manor of Castle Rising, who maintained a rabbit warren on land that was contested between the two manors. Kyd had studied the land upon which the warren lay and had noted that 'the greatest pte of the groundes in the ... warren … hath been heretofore in auncient tyme used in tylth as doth appere by the Rigges & furrowes in the said lands yet

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[212] Blomefield, An essay, II, 205.
[213] TNA, DL4/38/47.

aparently to be sene.' Robert recalled that he had seen corn growing on part of the area now claimed as warren, adding that he had heard 'his father one Jeffrey kydd & one Allen Glover & one Mawde Mann a very old woman all wch be nowe deceassed say that they have seene corne growe in sundry of the said grounds where the warren is nowe'. John Ponde, aged 78, drew the obvious conclusion from the evidence oral and physical evidence: he took note of the 'Riddges & furrowes' in the warren and concluded that Castle Rising warren included land that had been taken from the fields of South Wootton.[214] Robert Kyd and John Ponde were not alone in their ability to read ridge and furrow as a marker of the occupation of the land by working people prior to its inclusion in the estates of a lord. Across early modern England, looking upon signs of earlier cultivation and subsequent desertion, witnesses in legal cases were making the same point.[215] The land therefore became a bearer of memories of popular dispossession, legitimating claims to that land in the present.

What early twenty-first century landscape archaeologists like to call 'lumps and bumps' were also open to historical interpretation by early modern people. Memories of the consolidation of the gentry estate of Steeple Grange (Derbyshire), which had involved the reshaping of the landscape – removing hedges here, placing fences there – were emplotted upon the land. One deponent observed how a particular hedge had formed an important element in the division between Steeple Grange and the nearby town of Wirksworth until it had been torn down in the course of the consolidation of the Steeple Grange estate. Nonetheless, there endured 'an

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[214] TNA, E134/34&35Eliz/Mich 16. For later poaching activity on the Castle Rising Warren, see NRO, NQS CS3/41A, information of John Bendish, 10 December 1654.

[215] For other readings of ridge and furrow as signs of earlier human habitation, see TNA, E134/23&24Eliz/Mich14; BL, M485/39, Salisbury MS 151, fols. 28r-29v; TNA, E134/5Jas1/Mich1; TNA, E134/39Eliz/East20; TNA, DL4/43/12; TNA, E134/5Jas1/Mich15; BIA, CP/H/469; NRO, DN/DEP/6/5b, fols. 70r-v, 90v. A variation upon this theme that was specific to mining regions where tenants or free miners were laying claim to the mineral rights was to point to the 'auntient Marks and Tokens of works' upon the land. See, for instance, TNA, E134/11WmIII/Mich26.

auncient ditch' which was 'extant to be seene'.[216] Contrarily, the near-absence of any sign of any earlier hedges or walls told the 84 year-old yeoman Anthony Flint that Wigwell Green had always been part of the commons of nearby Wirksworth (Derbyshire). Despite what the local gentleman Richard Wigley had to say, Flint observed that the evidence was there to be read, 'for this dep[onen]t nev[er] could see any signe of wall or ditch wherby the same might have beene aunciently inclosed savinge one signe of ane ould wall towards Cromford more which one wilgoose ane ould servant at Wigwell tould this depont was made to shade & succour sheepe'.[217]

Landscapes told not only of earlier dispossession: some held stories of resistance. In 1609, the 87 year-old Sussex man Richard Reve could point to marks upon the commons of Netherfield. Here, enclosures had been made by a certain Mr Fynch in 1545, only to be cast down by rebels – known as 'commonwealths' – during the commotion time of 1549.[218] Elsewhere in Sussex, there were very similar memories that could be read from the land. Henry Applsey of Petworth explained in 1592 how he had been told by one of his aged neighbours, Henry Dockyn, that

> there had byn an olde enclosure there before viz., in the tyme of Kinge Henrye the Eight and there withall he shewed this deponent A banke; whereupon the saide new inclosure was to be sett, alonge wch banke this deponent did well p[er]ceave where the olde inclosure had gone by olde rayles and other stumpes wch this deponent did see there standinge wch olde enclosure as the saide Dockyn toulde this deponent was broken downe by occasion of an Insurrection wch happened as he now Remembreth in the dayes of Kinge Edward the Sixt'[219]

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[216] TNA, DL4/72/31.
[217] TNA, DL4/54/36.
[218] East Sussex Record Office, ASH 590.
[219] WSRO, PHA 5450, fols. 37r-38r.

It was not only in 1549 that such marks of resistance were left upon the land. In 1554, the 76 year-old Raphe Croucke recalled how, in his home village of Ashover (Derbyshire), there was an old ditch that lay across the Great Moor. This ditch, he remembered, was 'in old tyme pullyd done & made in a man[ner] playne'.[220] In 1542, surveyors noted that there was no physical division between Wheldrake Moor and Escrick Moss except a shallow ditch that had been made by one of the abbots of Fountains Abbey about 40 years earlier, and which, within a short space of time, had been cast in by the people of Escrick.[221] In some cases, fieldnames might call to mind their use prior to expropriation by some powerful individual or group. Thus, for instance, in 1597 an 80 year-old labourer from Brandon (Suffolk) observed how a stretch of land retained the name of 'pore mens lands' because it had always been 'sowen to the poore mens uses' until about 60 years before, the field had been seized by the lessee of the manorial rights 'for the inlargemt of his shepes course'.[222] In 1685 a sheepwalk that ran across the commons of the Derbyshire village of Brassington retained the name Foljamb's sheepwalk, so called for the lords who had imposed it upon the common seventy years before. The Brassington inhabitants still contested the severance of Foljamb's sheepwalk in 1685, its name encrypting the knowledge of its illicit seizure.[223] On Cannock Chase (Staffordshire) a piece of land was still known as Crofts Piece after a man named Crofts who had in the past attempted to sever it from the commons but who, in the face of enclosure disturbances, had been defeated.[224]

Surveying could also be a contested process: not all tenants were as obliging as the inhabitants of the Sussex village who were advised in 1585 to suffer their lord's officers to

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[220] TNA, C21/F11/10.
[221] Hull University Library, DDPA/10/2.
[222] TNA, E134/39Eliz/East8.
[223] TNA, DL4/123/1685/2.
[224] TNA, E134/34Chas2/Mich10.

survey their land. They replied that although the land was their ancient inheritance and that no one had a right to survey them but themselves, unless the lord 'should thinke much stubbernesse' in the tenants, they would cooperate.[225] Sometimes, tenants would simply express their frustration at a surveyor's lack of local knowledge: when surveyors looking into the customs of Wirksworth (Derbyshire) in 1609 observed that freehold land had become confused with copyhold, the manorial jurors replied testily that 'No man is so simple to b[u]y Coppiehould lande but by surrender in Courte'.[226] Elsewhere, tenants were more obstructive. At Fordington (Dorset) in 1612 and Long Bredy (Dorset) in 1615, the copyholders simply refused to allow surveyors any access to their records. Paralleling this refusal to popular documentation with the closing of popular senses of landscape, on Stoborough Heath in 1585, the tenants refused to show the surveyor the bounds of the common, as the surveyor suggested, because 'as wee take it … they would not have the just quantitie thereof to be knowen by the measuring'.[227] From his practical experience as a surveyor, John Norden knew very well the arguments which poorer people would levy against his trade. He set the following words into the mouth of his character the Farmer

> when you [that is, the Surveyor] pry into mens titles and estates, under the name…of Surveyors, whereby you bring men and matter in question oftentimes, that would (as long time they have) lye without question. And oftentimes you are the cause that men lose their Land: and sometimes they are abridged of such liberties as they have long used in Mannors: and customes are altered, broken and sometimes perverted or taken away by your meanes.[228]

The experience of surveying places like the Shropshire Marches, with its truculent tenantry and obscure customs, fed into Norden's writing. Importantly, he presupposed that surveying

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[225] WSRO, Add MS 2275, fol. 44r.

[226] TNA, DL43/1/36A.

[227] BL, Add Ms 29976, fols. 97r-98v.

[228] Norden, Surveyor's dialogue, 3. Another tract supportive of the surveyors' trade sought to defend itself against the criticism of the 'common sorte'. See McRae, God speed the plough, 171.

would be opposed by the local population. In the <u>Surveyor's dialogue</u> Norden attributed to the yeomanry the following words: 'we poore Country-men doe not thinke it good to have our Lands plotted out, and me thinks indeede it is to very small purpose: for is not the field it selfe a goodly Map for the Lord to looke upon, better then a painted paper?'[229] The authors of other surveying manuals proceeded upon the same assumption. One placed into the mouth of a critic of surveying the opinion that 'The worlde was merier, before measurings were used then it hath beene since. A tenant in these daies must pay for every foote, which is an extreme matter'.[230] Such hard-headed popular scepticism concerning the practice of surveying imprints itself on the archival evidence as well. In 1628, the commoners of Gillingham Forest (Dorset) 'refused to beleeve' that a map which supported the Crown's right to enclose the forest was 'a true plott or mapp' until the surveyor responsible for the document 'would affirme it uppon his oath to be good'.[231]

In some places there seems to have existed a distinctly <u>plebeian</u> sense of place. The clearest instance of this is to be found in the report submitted to the Duchy of Lancaster by a commission of gentlemen empowered in 1534 to hear a dispute between the tenants of the Liberty of Knaresborough (Yorkshire) and those of Copgrave concerning Rawcliffe moor.[232] The Commissioners explained that they had hoped to ride the disputed bounds on the day after they had scrutinised the documentation held in Knaresborough castle concerning the dispute, on which day they also expected to hear the opinions of the tenants. But, as they explained to the Duchy

> The kyngs tenn[an]ts Foresters and Comynars ... beinge before us to the nombre of
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> CCC (300) or there abowte sayde opynly to us that noo Gentylmen shulde trie the

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[229] Norden, <u>Dialogue</u>, 17.

[230] McRae, <u>God speed the plough</u>, 186.

[231] TNA, E134/3Chas1/East17.

[232] For the later history of Rawcliffe moor, see TNA, DL3/27/R5; York City Archives, M31/460.

> boundes of the Forest but only Suche as werr the kyngs tenn[an]ts of the same Forest and soo ever hadd beyn used to doo ... And wee seinge the wilfulnesse of them and the dannger of great mysthyff that was very like to have ensued at the last assemblie upon the mores for the bounding of the seyd Forrest thowght it not good that any greatt nombre of the seyd Foresters or of the Tenn[an]ts of the seyd Abbott and pryor sholde assemble uppon the mores for the boundinge of the seyd Forrest lest myschyff or manslawghter myght Insure therby

The commissioners therefore commanded that neither side should bring people to the viewing of the bounds other than those whom the Commissioners had already appointed, 'whereunto the seyd Foresters Annswered w[i]t[h] great fury that they wolde come thyther hole'. At which, seeing the potential for a 'fury', the Commissioners gave up.

It is important to bear in mind the often intimidating nature of the massive ditched hedges that were established in the course of enclosure. One historian of the topic has therefore written of the early modern hedge as 'organic barbed wire'.[233] As Matthew Johnson has recognized, in the early modern period 'the definition and nature of boundaries across physical and mental landscapes…became a key battleground – a key field – in which different social and cultural interests were played out'.[234] The effect of enclosure was not only to cut poorer people off from important resources; the imposition of new walls, hedges and ditches on landscapes shifted patterns of movement, senses of entitlement, feelings of belonging. Defenders of common rights often spoke of enclosure in terms of their physical exclusion. Thus, in 1587, the 85 year-old Thomas Ilbert of the Ormsby (Norfolk) explained how he had been born in the village and had 'dwelte there all the dayes of his lyef'. He recalled how, 'by the reporte of Anncyent men before his tyme' the tenants had always

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[233] Blomley, 'Making private property', 1.
[234] Johnson, Archaeology of capitalism, 71.

enjoyed pasture rights upon an area of common land called Barrow Lowes until 40 years ago when the lessee of the manor 'did <u>interrupte and exclude</u> [my emphasis] them for havinge the [pasture] thereof by setting a locke uppon the gate'.[235]

From this outraged sense of illicit exclusion – physical, legal and tenurial – the defenders of common rights drew a language of protest that was rooted in a sense of belonging. Fundamental to this was a sense of jolting transition from a wortld where customary entitlements mattered to one where they did not: in 1607, the 70-year old Chesterfield yeoman Richard Smith remembered how the nearby Cargreen Closes had once lain 'open and unenclosed and at that time used as common by the inhabitants of Staveley and were inclosed by Peter Frechevile esquire … he heard his father saie, that he hath fetched his grandfathers horses verie manie times forth of the said p[ar]cell of ground called Spronsley … he hath heard it crediblie reported by sundrie aunciient men threescore yeares agoe or thereabouts that hanley wood Clifford wood and Bate wood have lien open unto Hunley moore and have bene enclosed by the said Peter Frechevile k[nigh]t grandfather of the defend[an]t … he hath crediblie heard by sundrie aunciient men that before three score yeares last past, that aswell the inhabitants of duckmanton as Steveley have used to have common in Westwood, and that the Inhabitants of duckmanton had staffdrove there cattell to the said common called westwood'.[236] In 1606, shifts of men and women from Thetford (Norfolk) attacked servants of their lord who attempted to assert seigneurial rights over the local fens, exclaiming 'that they would die first in the place'.[237] Similarly extreme was the statement of the Westmorland tenants who in 1621, faced by the dissolution of the generous rights that had hitherto been guaranteed by the Crown, exclaimed 'that they would loose their lives before theire lyvings

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[235] TNA, E134/29&30Eliz/Mich8.

[236] TNA, E134/5JasI/Mich38.

[237] TNA, STAC8/5/2.13-18.

And that theire lordes were but a handfull or a Breakfaste, And that first they wold endeavour by Lawe, but if that would not doe then they would fighte for it'.[238] The sharpest statement of this connection between space, place and resistance was that uttered by the opponents of enclosure in Gillingham Forest (Dorset) in the 1620s: 'here we were born and here we will die'.[239]

Yet memories lingered: in 1605, Sussex folk who had never witnessed the imparkment of their ancestors' common land into the parkland of the local aristocracy knew that it had taken place because it was still 'manifest [and] well knowne to many aged Persons, especially to William Affrey the elder … who was … borne, bred, lived and dyed an old man there and knew all the several Tennancys hereafter expressed before that either Stoneland was imparked or Buckhurst Park inlarged'.[240] Moreover, the land need not only be a bearer of loss: memories of its former use could also represent an aspiration. In 1599, after the enclosure of Grimsby's East Marsh, the remaining 10 acres were reserved to the landless people of the town, who complained amongst themselves of how it had once been common and how 'they might perhaps live to see it so again'.[241]

In defending the hardwiring of custom into the land, poorer and middling people were defending much more than a body of material entitlements. They were defending their identity, their place in a community, their way of being and of remembering. In communities where change was slow, there remained some congruence between exterior and interior worlds – the known, familiar local world that had produced memories remained relatively stable and certain. Witnesses in court cases described a world they felt could never be lost, a

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[238] TNA, STAC8/34/4. 55.
[239] Underdown, Revel, riot and rebellion, 110.
[240] BL, Add MS 5705, fol. 108v.
[241] E. Gillett, A history of Grimsby (Oxford, 1970), 110.

world that had always been and would always be. By contrast, older witnesses discussing sudden change – enclosure, or the increase of poverty, or the undermining of generous tenure – often spoke in charged and emotive terms. In a culture that prized continuity and stability, they emphasized disruption, expressing a kind of cognitive dissonance – a gap between interior and exterior worlds – between the remembered world and what it had become. In extreme cases, this produced the kind of ecological alienation so shaped by dominant forces that it could become a target for attack. There is a fundamental shift here: in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century enclosed village, we find the deliberate destruction of crops and plants, animal-maiming and rick-burning.[242] These were the strategies of a rural proletariat that had lost any roots in the land that it worked. In the end, the land became the bearer of a different kind of resistance than that which is seen in the early modern period – rather than attempting to reclaim lost entitlements through reasserting its entitlement to common land, this later rural proletariat came to see the land as the bearer of its misery, of its anger and its alienation. Here, too, there was a politics of landscape; but one that was harsher and more hopeless than that which had preceded it.

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[242] This is implied in C.J. Griffin, '"Cut down by some cowardly miscreants": plant maiming, or the malicious cutting of flora, as an act of protest in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century rural England', Rural History, 19, 1 (2008), 29-54.